18. 4

AN ABRIDGMENT OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

CONTEINING

Many excellent Precepts, & Aduertiſments, touching the Holy, and Sacred myſticall Diuinity.

Written in Italian, by Fa. Achilles Galliardi *of the Society of* IESVS, *& tranſlated into English,*

I. M. S.

BY

Boo. 2. 8.

The Right Honourable, & Religious Lady, the La. M. P.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Imprinted Anno M. DC. XXVI.

STC 1540

Collegium Emmanuelis
Cantabrigiæ

TO THE RELIGIOVS MEN AND WOMEN OF OVR NATION.

AND

To all others who desire to attayne to the eminent state of Christiã Perfection: health in our Lord.

THIS Little Booke (Deuout Religious in Christ Iesus) being first written in Italian by the

R. Father Achilles Galliardi of the Society of IESVS, and deliuered ouer, in written papers only, vnto an Honourable and very deuout Lady of *Millan*, for her priuate instruction, and better aduancement in spirituall matters, was some yeares past gotten out of her Closet, and communicated to more, then it was at first intended. For a little after it was carryed into France and there translated, and printed in the French tongue; but with so many omissions, obscurities, and other faults, contrary to the Authors meaning, that in many places it could hardly be drawne to any perfect sense: the which some

ſome perſons of great zeale, & well experienced Maiſters of Spirit perceauing, and lamenting that ſo excellent a Treaſure ſhold be obſcured & clowded in ſuch darknes; did carefully labour to correct what was amiſſe, by making cleere the obſcure places and by reſtoring of many paſſages to their proper ſenſe, which were before corrupt and intricate: that ſo being publiſhed anew, it might appeare worthy to be preſented to the view of poſterity.

In this little Worke then, is conteyned, and ſet before our eyes, Doctrine of ſo great Perfection, endeauouring ſo to

purify the intention, & reduce the mind of man to conformity and vnion with the Will of God, that the view of ſo great a light, may perhaps dazle the eyes of ſuch, as yet do looke throgh the clowd of ſelfe-loue, and are not fully reſolued to repell their inward enemyes; & in that reſpect it is not intended, or directed to any ſuch. And much leſſe is it offered to ſenſuall minds, who cannot iudge, or diſcerne the worth of ſuch a pearle, but would rather träple it vnder their feete, then tread the pathe which leades to ſuch a treaſure.

But I doubt not to deeme it fitly preſented to the reading of

of all ſuch, as haue entred, or reſolued to enter the pathes of Perfection, by imitation of Chriſt our Lord, in practiſe & performance of the Counſells Euãgelicall. For of ſuch minds we may with reaſon hope, that firſt God for his part, as he hath called them from the purſuite of worldly vanities to the verity of his diuine loue: ſo he will be no leſſe bountiful vnto them in aſſiſting their endeauours with plenty of grace, vntill he haue perfected the work which himſelfe hath begun in their ſoules.

And of their part, as they haue receaued from God ſo much light, as to find this Trea-

ſure, and ſo much wiſdome as to know the value therof, and ſo much fortitude of mind as to contemne their formerworldly eſtate, for the purchaſe of this field or ſtate of Religious life: ſo we may iuſtly expect at their handes, that according to the light, wiſedome, and fortitude which they haue receaued, they ſhould be deſirous, and glad to labour in digging out the ſayd treaſure, and getting it entierly into their owne poſſeſſion: and therefore alſo that they ought neyther to be loath to vndertake the labour of digging, nor yet to thinke much, if hauing gotten the gold, to ſeuer it from the earth and droſſe which adhereth

reth vnto it. And this true intention of benefitting themselues (which is neuer wāting in any wise man that hath foūd but an earthly Treasure) is as much as this Book requireth, in the practise of whatsoeuer is heere prescribed.

For first we be heere aduised to dig & descend into our own nothing by *Anihilation*: then to cast vp and throw from vs all the earthly substance which lyeth betweene vs & the treasure, and this by *Disappropriation*, or as it is called in the Ghospell, by *Renunciation* of all thinges which we possesse. Then we be led by the vertue of *Indifferency* to cleanse it also be-

ing found, from the duſt of our priuate affections, and ſelf-intereſt. And thus the gold being gotte into our poſſeſſion it the teacheth vs firſt how to purify the ſame from the droſſe of all ſelfe-loue, by the *Conformity* of our will to the Will of God. Secondly, to refine it yet more from the baſer kind of mettall, which is ofte much mixed with this diuine gold, and yet hardly by the eye to be diſcerned, but the touchſtone of Chriſt his example doth try it, & the fire of Charity doth refine it, ſo that it then comes to be *Aurum ignitum*, ſpoken of in the Apocalyps, and one thing, as it were, with the fire it ſelfe; and this

is therefore called *Vniformity*.

Then remayneth only, that this gold thus feruent and pliable to the will of him that worketh it, receaue the ſtampe of the heauenly King; that ſo it may be currant coyne in his diuine Court: in which it is only a Patient, and nothing is expected of it, but that it take, without reſiſtance, what impreſſion the workman is beſt pleaſed to impoſe. This is the worke of Grace in the ſoule; the workeman is God himſelfe, and the ſtampe he imprinteth in it, is his owne Image: and ſo this ſixt and higheſt degree of perfection is called *Deiformity*.

In this ſtate the Soule hauing first

firſt reiected al impediments to her well-doing, rooted out all euill habits, planted in her ſelfe the habits of ſolid vertues, and ſeuered from her intention all ſelfe-loue; yea hauing by the help of Gods Grace, purified euen her moſt inward deſires, & all ſenſible inclinations, frō the infection of ſelfe-intereſt, then is her will not conformed only, but vnited vnto the will of God, and ſo transformed into the ſame, that now it ſeemeth not to be her will that worketh, but the will of God which worketh in her: as though ſhe had giuen her own hart vnto Chriſt, and (as we read of *Catherine* of *Siena*) had

receā-

receaued his in exchange, to be in her, from that tyme forward, the beginning and firſt motiue of all her operations.

Of which eſtate alſo we may vnderſtand the wordes of the Apoſtle *Gal.*2. when he ſayd, *Viuo autem, iam non ego, viuit verò in me Chriſtus*: And I liue, now not I, but Chriſt liueth in me. Much like as we ſee the graffe which is inſerted into another ſtock, which liueth indeed in it ſelfe, & bringeth forth fruit, but not by the life it had before, from it owne naturall roote; but by the ſap & life it now receaueth from the new ſtock into which it is graffed, in which it growes, & by which it liues.

To this moſt high & excellent Perfection this little Treatiſe doth guide vs. To this your deuout minds, I aſſure my ſelf, do aſpire. For the obtayning of this, I beſeech his diuine Goodnes to aſſiſt vs all with his holy grace, & to repleniſh your ſoules with the comfort of his celeſtiall Spirit, and to make me partaker of your holy merits. This 27. of Ianuary. 1612.

Yours in all Chriſtian duty,

M. P.

AN ADVERTISMENT TO THE READER.

IT is fit, gentle Reader, thou ve aduertiſed, that whe as in the former Epiſtle & in ſundry places of this booke alſo, there is mention made, that when the will commeth to be vnited, and as it were transformed into the will of God, that then it muſt be a Patient, rather then an Agent: according to which thou ſhalt alſo find many

many aduiſes in the booke, (eſpecially in the Chapters of the ſecond & third Eſtate) where it is taught that the ſoule muſt be content to forgo firſt all actiue operation, and practiſe euen of vertues themſelues, and laſtly to be depriued euen of the paſsiue alſo, ſo farr as it may ſeeme ſenſible vnto the ſoule that it is her own work. And this to the end that Gods will may be the pure, and only motiue of her will and workes whatſoeuer; thou muſt beware in theſe, & the like ſentences, of two ſeuerall doctrines or errors, wholy contrary to that which is heere intended. The one, leaſt thou thinke that a ſoule being come to that eſtate, doth not indeed work with her owne will, but that God then worketh all in her, ſo that thoſe workes be not really the actions of the ſoule, but of God himſelfe; which thing is both falſe and abſurd. The other error is, that a ſoule in this ſtate of Perfection ſhould not doe any thing, but as ſeeing her ſelf to be cleer-

cleerly moued therunto by the will of God, and in a manner compelled by the ſame to doe all her actions, ſo that she in the meane tyme should be idle, vntill she feele this impulſion from God. This doctrine would nourish ſlouth in the ſoule, yea and breed, if not bring forth, hereſy alſo againſt the freedome of our wil, and againſt the neceſſitie of our concurrence with the grace of God: all which are not different only, but contrary to the intentiõ of the Author, as beſides the authority of the Pariſian Doctours who approued this booke, when it was tranſlated out of Italian, and ſet forth in their owne language) the diligent & impartiall Reader may alſo by himſelf eaſily diſcerne, if he mark wel the whole diſcourſe. For he shall find it here required, that one omit no practiſe, or proofe of likely meanes, either in rooting out of euill, or in planting of good habits. Alſo that all the rules, & aduiſes of this booke, are to be applied to euery mans eſtate and

and that he omitting no part of his dutie, doe practiſe the ſame, togeather with the actions which his eſtate and inſtitute require. Laſtly that this Subtractiō *of actiue and paſsiue Will, touching the acts of vertue, is the worke only of God in the ſoule, with which (when the ſoule doth perceaue it to be ſo) it muſt concurre as with the will of God, to will the ſame thing, as our dutie doth bind vs. And this is no other thing then we find in daily practiſe, though all doe not feele it a like, nor all follow this rule, as they ſhould, when they feele it. It happeneth vnto vs more or leſſe whenſoeuer any deſolation by Gods appointment doth fall vpon vs. for in that caſe we finde our ſelues leſſe apt then before to will, or worke any good, yea, or to ſuffer the proceeding of that good (which before we deſired) with any contentment: and this deſolation may ſo increaſe, that it ſhall ſeeme to vs, our deſire carrieth vs wholy to the contrary of that we had reſolued. But all*

this

this is only in the inferiour part of our ſoule, to wit, in our naturall inclination, which for the time is left to it ſelf, by Subtraction *of that effect, and fruit of grace, by which it was before comforted, ſtrengthened, and enabled to performe good actions, and concurre to ſupernaturall vertues, with deſire and delight: which to be the effectes and fruits of grace, the Apoſtle teacheth,* Galat. 5. 22. *when he ſaith:* Fructus autem ſpiritus eſt charitas, gaudium, pax, patientia &c. *So that all this while grace is not diminished in the ſuperiour part of the ſoule, nor the vertues leſſe perfect which are placed therin, but only the redoundance, fruit, and effect of that grace is ſtopped, and ſubtracted for the time, from the inferiour part, to increaſe the battaile which the ſoule is to haue, and the victory which it is to obtaine, by conſtantly conforming, and vniting her will to Gods, notwithſtanding that increaſed difficultie; yea by renouncing*

her

her owne naturall will and inclination, transforming the ſame into the will of God, and ſo ſaying with our Saviour Chriſt in the like caſe: Non mea, ſed tua voluntas fiat, Pater: *not my will, o Father, but thine be done. In whoſe example we may ſee, that the practiſe of this point may ſtand with all Perfection, which could not be wanting in his actions. So that the ſcope of this doctrine is not to make vs idle or remiſſe in working, nor to expect that God ſhould doe all in vs, and that our will ſhould haue no part in the action: but it requireth, that we doe cooperate with Gods grace, and labour with all diligence, whileſt we can. And when by Gods ordinance we feele that our ſenſible forces do faile vs, and that we are not now able to creep, who before were able to runne in the wayes of God (as the Prophet ſaith,* Pſal. 118.32.) cùm dilatatet cor noſtrum, *whileſt he dilated our hart with ioy and comfort: we muſt then conforme*

forme our will to God, yea, and be glad to transforme our weake will into his ſtrength of goodnes, to vnite our drop of water to his ſea of graces, and to ſay with our actiue will (though our inclinations ſtriue againſt it) that his will ſhall be ours, and therfore tha we deſire his will may be done with vs in all thinges, howſoeuer our inferiour part doe, according to nature, deſire the contrary.

This is the Perfection vnto which this Booke leadeth: the practiſe wherof we may ſee both vſed, and declared by God to his beloued Apoſtle, as may be gathered out of the firſt Chapter of the 2. Epiſt. ad Cor. *and it is the higheſt which the ſoule can arriue vnto in this life. For as the will of God is infinitly good, and euen goodnes it ſelf, ſo the nearer we come vnto it the more we approach to a good and perfect eſtate. Neyther can there be, eſteemed by imagination conceaued, a higher Perfection, or grea-*

ter

ter happines, either in this world or the next, then to be vnited vnto God, the fountaine of all goodnes. In this life it is to be done by grace, and in the next by glorie. This litle Booke, gentle Reader, will lead thee to the one, and thy diligent practise of what it teacheth, will bring thee to the other.

Christ IESVS graunt vs grace to seeke this treasure with true desire, & finding it, to vse it to our best commoditie. We shall doe it the better, if we pray hartily for one another, which I purpose to doe for all, that will endeauour to practise this Booke, & do craue the like of them for my greater needs. Farewell.

M. P.

AN

AN ABRIDGMENT OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

WHAT PERFECTION ought to be presupposed in the Soule that entreth into the practise of that, which is treated off in this discourse.

CHAP. I.

THis Perfectiō requireth a firme and resolute desire in the soule that vndertaketh it, & a determinate and setled purpose to

to attayne vnto it, and aboue all, it must be as the marke at which she aymeth, and the end which she pretendeth in all her actions. It requireth also, that she giue her selfe to mortification of her senses and passions, endeauouring to subdue the repugnance and contradiction which riseth of them, and to obtaine full dominion and victory ouer them. Moreouer that she apply her selfe wholy to the mortification, and abnegation of her will, and proper iudgement; vnder an entire obedience and a ful direction of her Superiors, euen with all the forces of her soule. That likewise she so apply her self to vertue according to the occasiõs occurring, or in any other sort; & principally to charity, to the loue of God and her neighbour, that she be not in this way alwayes rude, and as a beginner, but well advanced

uanced and profited by progreſſe of time; at the leaſt ſhe muſt haue attayned a firme reſolution, to be willing rather to dye, then to offend God, yea although but venially, or to commit one of the leaſt defects againſt perfection, in ſuch ſort, that the ſinne ſhe doth commit, be by meere occurring frailty. The cauſe, wherefore all this that hath byn ſayd ought to be preſuppoſed, is, for that a firme purpoſe of al theſe things in generall, is moſt neceſſary for the obtayning of Perfection. And it is certaine that whoſoeuer without a very earneſt deſire of theſe things doth with coldnes, and negligence ſeeke after vertue, giuing himſelfe to his proper commodities, & ſelfe intereſts, liuing like a libertine, and with a will to remayne in his old habits, without amendment; can neuer attayne, nor come

neere to Perfection, & much leſſe to this that is the higheſt of all.

TWO PRINCIPSES in which conſiſteth Perfection.

CHAP. II.

ALL the building of ſo high Perfection is foũded in theſe two Principles, which conſiſt in practice: and therefore by the vſe of them, being attentiue to the daily actions of his vocation, and inſtitution, aſſuredly he ſhall come to the toppe, and full height of all his building. The firſt principle is, to haue a meane, & baſe eſteeme of things created, and aboue all of himſelfe: frõ which eſteeme ought to be deriued at leaſt in affection, an entire forſaking of al creatures, and a renouncing of himſelfe. And concerning his affection, to haue al-

alwayes this firme in his will & reſolution, but to put it in practiſe principally when it is needfull. And from this ought to be deriued alſo a true knowledg of the withdrawing that God worketh in vs, admitting, and accepting it with a ready will, to wit, to content our ſelues, and with great ioy of hart to accept it, when our Lord retyreth himſelfe a little from vs, or depriueth vs of anything whatſoeuer.

The ſecond Principle is, to haue a moſt high eſteeme of God, not by the way of penetration with Theologicall conceipts, or the like high pointes of Diuinity, for this few can reach vnto, and it is not neceſſary; but rather by the meane of a great promptitude, & entire ſubmiſſion of the will, and of the whole man, to the maieſty of God, to adore him, and to doe

whatſoeuer he exacteth of vs, for his greater glory, without any intereſt of ours, how holy ſoeuer it be. For which eſteeme it ſufficeth, that the ſoule with the light of fayth apprehend God (as we are taught in our Creed) as Almighty, the ſoueraigne good, our end: and that for the great loue he bare vnto vs, he was mooued to make himſelfe man, to ſuffer paines and death for our ſakes. Moreouer that he is alwaies preſent with vs, and in all things gouerneth vs, as well in thoſe of nature, as of grace: and in particuler calleth vs with a ſingular vocation, to labour for ſo high Perfection, & the like; which ſpeciall fauours our Lord giueth to euery one conformable to his capacity, & according to the meaſure of grace.

Of this ſo excellent, and high eſteeme, ought to ſpring a full and en-

entire conformity with thediuine Will, which alwayes muſt be the rule of all our deſignemens, affections and dayly operations. This māner of working by the foreſaid meane, with the vſe of theſe two Principles, bringeth the Soule to the vnion, and transformation in God, which is called Deification, not by the myſticall way of rauiſhing out of our ſenſes, and eleuation of the vnderſtanding, nor by moſt vehement affections, that are deriued, and proceed from thence; for this is ſubiect to a thouſand illuſions, and to great labour, with danger of infirmity of body, and ruine of ſpirit, and ſuch payne for the moſt part auaileth little, and few do attayne vnto it: But it is by the beaten and common way, to wit, by the will wholy conformed, & with great ſtability tranſformed into the diuine Will, by

perfect loue, the which maketh it to worke all in God, and for God euen without light: and of this all are capable, and any that wil, may come vnto it with ioy, and comfort, but yet not without payne and labour. And after this there followeth ordinarily many other giftes of light, and diuine affections, but they are to be taken as graces that are giuen *gratis*, as truly they are, and we ought not to be too carefull for them, or to rely much vpon them. They are diuers according to the variety of ſoules, to ſome more, to others leſſe; and there is no rule on our part, but all dependeth of God, and ought to be wholy ſubmitted to his diuine pleaſure.

OF THE FIRST Estate: & first of Anihilation.

CHAP. III.

THE foresayd principles applied to the diuersities of our occasions, actions, and motions, do make the soule to walke with continuall progresse, from the beginning, euen vnto the end of Perfection, and all is reduced into three estates, euery one of which, and principally the first, contayneth diuers degrees, that maketh the soule mount, as it were, by certayne degrees, going from one estate vnto another, euen to the last. In the first estate, the soule walketh by the way of the knowledge, & base esteeme of her selfe, which is done in diuers manners, and principally in foure.

1. The first is in acknowledging, and esteeming herselfe purely nothing, seing that of nothing she was created, and should be cōuerted into nothing of her selfe, if God did not conserue her. Vnto which it helpeth much, to compare herselfe to the whole world, to all men, to heauen, to Saints, & to God himselfe, in respect of which things, she knoweth herselfe to be not so much as a little drop of water, compared with the sea

2. Secondly in houlding herselfe for the most vile, and vnprofitable creature of all, how vile soeuer they be, as is dust, a sinke, an Apostеme &c. all these things being good for some vse, but she for nothing, but to offend God.

3. Thirdly in thinking herselfe the greatest sinner in the world, yea greater then all the diuels put

togeather, and worthy of more chastisement, attributing to herselfe al the sinnes that are committed, and that all their tormentes duly might be inflicted vpon her. For there is no sin but she might haue committed it, if God had not preserued her. Exãples of this may be seene in the liues of *S. Francis*, and *S. Catherine* of *Siena*.

4. The fourth consisteth in this, that she ought to descend to the knowledge of the thinges of the world, the better to contemne them: and for the reiecting of them, she must make choice of the vilest and basest of them, as concerning her place, garments, and any thing els; yet so notwithstanding, that she affect not singularity: and she must esteeme the most abiect corner in the house the fittest habitation for her; and that the office, or charge she hath, excee-

deth much her merits; and that she is not worthy of them, much lesse of greater. The foresayd practice bringeth a man to a true anihilatiõ of himselfe. And although he doth not apprehend such conceipts in his vnderstanding, as may clearely represent such basenes vnto him, as he would; yet doth not he leaue to haue that esteeme of himselfe, seeing that he, who willingly abaseth himselfe, and preferreth all creatures, how vile soeuer they be, before him, esteemeth and reputeth himselfe alwayes the least: & he that knoweth not the practise of this anihilation, knoweth not the profit, and commodity thereof.

Thirdly in the soule that is foũded thus in her owne nothing, there followeth also the disappropriation or true abnegation, the subtraction or withdrawing that God

God accuſtometh to worke in the ſoule, and the conformity with the diuine will, which maketh a man to be transformed into God: & theſe things as they haue diuers obiects, ſo they haue diuers degrees, according to the order that followeth.

OF THE FIRT *degree of Abnegation, Subtraction, Conformity: and of the Abiection, and Anihilation of our ſelues.*

CHAP. IIII.

FIRST, and principally there is wrought in the ſoule a full, & entire renunciation of al things created, that are indifferent, as life, death, health, all commodities, taſt and intereſt of them, offices, dignities, poſſeſſions, and other

the like things; and this is to be done, first with the affections, renouncing them entierly, and all desire or will she may haue of thē: and for her owne part, she ought to cast all desire, and affection, & intētion that she may haue therin, and the hopes of any commodity, tast and pleasure that may be had therby, euen as if she were dead.

Secondly by worke, leauing actually that which is superfluous, and retayning only that which is needfull to her, according to her state, with the counsayle, & consent of her Superiors. To this doth correspond the subtraction, or withdrawing, that God doth in vs of the like things, to wit, of life, by sending vs death, of health, by visiting vs with sicknes, of commodities and meanes when they are taken from vs, of pleasures and solaces, sending vs paynes: and finally

nally of any other worldly chãge, whereof we haue experience almoſt euery houre. All being done by the diuine prouidence in ſuch ſort, that there paſſeth not any day, in which our Lord doth not take from vs, and depriue vs (according to the variety of his prouidence) of many obiects, & commodities, concerning theſe tranſitory, and fading things. And he that is free from all affection to the like thinges, admitteth with great alacrity all priuation of them, and eaſily contemneth them all, how great ſoeuer they be.

Likewiſe to this ſubtraction, & priuation correſpondeth a meruaylous conformity with the diuine Will, not deſiring any created thing whatſoeuer, but that which our Lord willeth, and that which he giueth vs, reioycing to be, by the meanes of theſe changes & varieties,

rieties, continually depriued of them by his fatherly bounty: and euen those things, that he bestoweth vpon vs, we ought not desire to haue them, but only for that his will is so, hauing no regard to our particuler interest, commodity, desire and affection, but only to the greatest glory of God: not seruing our selues, or vsing any thing, but conformable to the diuine Will, manifested vnto vs by the will, and ordinances of our Superiour, and according to our manner of lyuing.

The practice of all this consisteth, first in a totall indifferency in respect of things created, as we haue set downe for the foundation of our exercises. Secondly to make election of an estate conformable to Gods will; and if already we haue done so, we must choose in the manner of liuing therein the

baſeſt, and moſt abiect, praying & working continually with the ſelfe ſame rules of our exerciſes. Thirdly to exerciſe in all our dayly operations the vertues according to their occurents, to wit, temperance, patience, & the like, with abnegation, ſubtraction, & election, already ſpoken of, by which means the vertues we do (eſpecially if we conforme them to the diuine Wil, & do them for his glory, and honour) come to be more noble, more perfect, & excellent then before. The fourth conſiſteth in a totall dependance of the prouidēce, and wil of God, in all that he giueth vs, or taketh from vs of any thing created. Fiftly in offering our ſelues during our praier, and out of the ſame, entirely, and fully vnto God.

By all theſe exerciſes there is increaſed in the ſoule with the foreſaid

reſaid conformity, a very great, & true loue of God, ſeeing there is taken away al the hinderances of any created thing, that was betweene God & the Soule. And by this meanes the ſoule commeth to vnite herſelfe perfectly with her Creatour, & to tranforme her ſelf perfectly into him: from which ordinarily followeth great gifts, as lights, affections, and diuine motions: but for theſe we are not to be much carefull, but to ſeeke aboue all, to ſeparate our ſelues with all our power from created things, and wholy to reſigne our ſelues vnto God. And this is the extaſy, and rauiſhing of the will, and not of the Vnderſtanding, which is much greater, and higher, and which Deifieth the ſoule more.

THE SECOND *Degree.*

Chap. V.

WE ought to passe further in subtraction, or withdrawing our selues from things created. For not only this subtraction ought to be of indifferent thinges, as is said, but also of holy and spirituall, that are meanes to vnite the spirit with God; yet not, as of such, must we depriue our selues of them, but for so much as vnder the colour of holines, there may be hid proper loue, and particuler interest; & of these there is to be noted many degres. The first, and that which is commonly vnderstood of spirituall men to be the lowest, or basest, is tou-

touching ſpirituall conſolations, redounding euen to the affections of the hart, that are ſenſitiue, to wit, tendernes, feruour, teares, ſweetnes in our operations, & great facility ſurmounting difficulties, by aboundance of ſpirituall delight: of which things we ought to depriue our ſelues, and not to ceaſe vntil ſuch time, as we haue no more feeling of any deſire to them.

The depriuing our ſelues of theſe, conſiſteth in not making any eſteeme, or any accompt of them, conſidering that theſe facilities, that induce vs to worke, proceed not of any habit, or particuler gifts or graces, nor principally of charity; but only of this ſweetnes and pleaſure taken therin, which is an obiect very proportionate to ſelfeloue, and particuler intereſt, which nouriſheth

it

it selfe with selfe contentment, & pleasure, and commeth in tyme vnto a spirituall gluttony: and to receaue satisfaction in this, or to make any great esteeme therof, is no other thing, then to conuert holy obiects into our delights & pleasures, and abuse holy things, accommodating them to our gust, and feeling. A very great vice, although it be secret and hid. from which easily may spring diuers vaine delightes, proud illusions, and diabolicall deceipts, and a thousand other euills. Also we must not thinke that vertue dependeth of them or cõsisteth therin, but we must know, that this is a childish thing, and that with this sweetnes & facility, a litle strength and vertue is sufficient to make vs imbrace the hardest, and most difficult matters: therfore we must depriue our selues of al desire

of

of them as of a meane thing, & of little eſteme: and by the foreſaid anihilation, acknowledge our ſelues moſt vnworthy of them, with a totall indifferency to haue them or not, being incited by vertue & perfection, to vſe them when we haue them, only for the end that God ſendeth them, to wit; acknowledging them with great ſubmiſſion, and referring them vnto God, from whome they proceed, directing in them our intention to eſtabliſh vs, and to increaſe ſo much the more in true & ſolide vertues: taking alwaies heed leaſt being tranſported, and made drunk with this ſwetnes & ſpirituall taſt, we do not make purpoſes, or dangerous promiſes of vertues, or workes that ſurpaſſe our forces, and which, when that ſenſible delight and pleaſure ceaſeth, wil ſeeme moſt difficult, yea im-

impoſſible vnto vs.

And to auoid ſuch danger, the ſubmiſſion already ſpoken of, helpeth greatly; that is, when we admit with great promptitude of hart, the taking away of ſuch conſolations as God is accuſtomed at times to take from vs, and then to make greater eſtimation of God, and of vertue, then of any ſuch conſolations, yet labouring ſtill according to thoſe former motiõs, with a greater, and more ardent deſire then euer, without hauing regard to the contentment of ſelf-loue, but only to the loue of vertue it ſelfe, and for the diuine glory.

The Conformity with God heere is cleare, and is of great importance; for that to vnite himſelfe with the diuine will, he depriueth himſelfe, on his part, of ſuch conſolatiõ, contenting himſelfe

ſelfe with his ſpirituall croſſe whatſoeuer it be; and ſo much the more, for that ſuch taſts, and motions ſurpaſſe all things created, and all the pleaſures that they can affoard: and how much the more a man depriueth himſelfe in this ſort; ſo much the more he tranſformeth himſelfe into God, and perfect loue, and Deification increaſeth in him.

THE THIRD *Degree.*

CHAP. VI.

AFTER the foreſaid degree, there is accuſtomed to ſucceed & deſcend into the ſoule celeſtiall lights, deſires, and affectiõs of ſtable and ſolid vertues, that are without compariſon much more high, then the ſweetnes already ſpo-

ſpoken of; for that they are moſt effectuall meanes for getting of the ſaid ſolid and ſtable vertues, & haue their being in the ſuperiour part of man. And then the ſoule ought to mount to the higheſt degree of forſaking and renouncing his owne will, & of ſubtraction, and cõformity to the diuine will, with the help of the anihilation, & humble eſteeme aforeſaid.

Therfore it is neceſſary to be aduertiſed, that although ſuch lights, & affections be from God in the beginning, and that preſently vpon the receiuing, & imbracing of them, they produce in the ſoule excellent effects, mouing & inciting it to vnite her ſelf with God, by the meanes of firme & ſolid vertues: neuertheles ſoone after if a man be not well aduiſed, but ſuffer himſelfe to proceed according to his naturall inclinatiõ, he ordi-

ordinarily will imbrace willingly ſuch lights, & affections, with a certaine ſatisfaction, and a very great contentement in himſelf: which is a hidden delight of himſelfe in them: and to cooperate with ſuch lights he ſetteth himſelfe to diſcourſe at large, and to fortifie the naturall forces of his vnderſtanding, wil, and affections, with the which it ſeemeth vnto him, that his firſt lights much increaſe, & are interiourly dilated: which yet is not ſo, neither is it any effect of God, but only a pure reflection of the ſoule, and a great contentemẽt and pleaſure, which ſhe taketh of their firſt beginning.

And thus by little and little, the infuſion of ſuch lights comming to ceaſe, the naturall, and reaſonable ſtrength of the ſoule remaineth alone, which ordinarily is ſelf-loue, which by this delight

light goeth dilating this little that he hath of diuine light, esteeming that to be very great which is not: and in this sort he falleth into blindnes of pride, & vaine perswasion of great vertue, frō whence do spring a thousand falshoods, deceipts & illusions; our Lord withdrawing his hand, because of the barre of self-loue which man hath put in his way: and yet such do thinke that they haue great grace infused, & great light, and it is nothing (the beginning only excepted) but only discourse, and naturall strength. And in the end, abandoned of the diuine influence, they fall into great faults, & errours; and from hence oftentimes proceed very great illusions which notwithstanding had a good beginning.

Presently therfore when the soule receaueth such motions, she

ought to humble, and anihilate her ſelfe with great ſubmiſſion, euen as nothing. And this act rooteth out, and cutteth off all the force of this delight already ſpoken of. Afterwards ſhe muſt proteſt, that ſhe will not ſeeke any ſelfe-contentment, reputing her ſelfe moſt vnworthy, as a moſt vile & abiect perſō; & this to free her ſoule of al ſelfe-loue, which by reaſon of ſuch lights may enter into it. And heere ſhe depriueth herſelfe of a much more noble thing then before, & by this greater vertue is obtained: & although it ſeeme vnto her that ſhe diminiſheth, or decreaſeth, yet notwithſtanding it is not ſo, but the hinderance is taken away that kept the ſoule backe, & did hurt her greatly. And our Lord finding the ſoule by ſuch abnegation diſpoſed, increaſeth with his particu-

ler

ler concourſe, the like lights and motions, by true & ſolid meanes, although it be not with ſo great taſt, & pleaſure, and guideth her with great ſafety in the way of Perfection.

The ſoule thus depriued by the meanes of ſuch pure & diuine lights, commeth to refer and attribute them vnto God, feeling her ſelf in them affected only to the diuine glory, and not vnto any other thing, with great acknowledgement of the diuine bounty, who vouchſafeth by diuine infuſions, to abaſe himſelf to ſo vile a thing. And this rule of ſpirituall motions is a matter of great importance: for that, if they be not of God, preſently they wil be diſcouered by this abnegation; and if ſuch lights come from God, we ſhal be ſecured, that neither ſelfe loue, nor the diuell can haue any

part in them. And moreouer referring them vnto God, who hath giuen them vnto vs, we come to make more esteeme of the giuer, then of the gifts, and by this meanes get true and solid vertue.

There followeth afterwards another conformity of most pure lights, and motions, with the act of the will, and affections, purged from all selfe respect, and vested with the diuine will, pretending in such diuine influences only to obey Almighty God, & his diuine pleasure, and nothing our selues, where with the soule passeth into God, & transformeth her selfe more highly, and profoundly then euer; & heere she offereth, & giueth, & dedicateth her self wholy vnto God.

THE FOVRTH

Degree.

CHAP. VII.

AFTER that the ſoule is exerciſed thus in purging & diſappropriating her ſelfe in theſe ſpirituall motions, and in deſire of ſolid vertue, as hath bin ſaid: there wil follow a higher degree which is this. It happeneth often, that hauing ſuch deſires, the ſoule cannot attayne vnto that ſhe pretendeth, and that for ſome worldly, or humane cauſe which doth hinder it: as for example, when we muſt leaue prayer, by the which the ſoule findeth her ſelfe prompt, apt, ready, and as it were inuited to vnite her ſelfe with God. And obedience on the other ſide, or

charity requireth to leaue it for another worke of great diſtractiõ, but profitable to our neighbours. And this wilbe neceſſary not only in one worke, or at one tyme only, but it ſhalbe needfull alſo concerning our manner of liuing, to leaue the quiet, and contemplatiue life, in which the ſoule felt her ſelfe greatly inflamed with ardent deſire of ſolid vertues, to buſy herſelf in the negotiations of the actiue life, in which ſhe ſhall haue great repugnance, and by which ſhe ſhall receaue many occaſions of diſtraction; neuertheles ſhe ſeeth clearely, that ſhe is called by God to leaue that for this, & ſometymes alſo ſhall find hinderances which proceed from God, to wit, when God giueth vs not ſo quickly as we would, this vertue & perfection, which he inciteth vs to deſire.

In

In the like occasions the soule is accustomed to feele payne, anxiety, and sorrow, for such hinderances, and is therewith very much afflicted. It is needfull heere that she consider, that there may be selfe-interest in this busines, although it be very secret, and hidden, which she ought to cast away wholy, with a noble and courageous abnegation.

The sorrow then, and anxiety that afflicteth the soule in such desires, and maketh it vnquiet, procedeth ordinarily of selfe-loue: and although it be without sinne, neuertheless it is a hinderance betweene God, and the soule; seeing that as a thing created, it hindereth perfection, and keepeth the soule backe from arriuing to the top of the same. Also the propriety is discouered plainely, although it be of a holy thing, and it seemeth ther-

by (althogh indirectly) that a man will giue a law vnto God. And finally the vnquietnes that afflicteth the foule inwardly, is not of God, whose spirit is sweet and gratious, and full of peace and tranquility: & to take away such vnquietnes, he must forsake such desires, & the vertue it selfe, in the manner that followeth.

Firſt a man ought to accept, & receiue this desire as a gift of God, without resting or staying himselfe in his proper delight and satisfaction, as hath been sayd in the degree before: and he ought to procure with all diligence to put it in execution, neuer letting passe any meanes, that he doth not try by experience, & put in practice, that thereby he may come to such vertue and perfection: for so much as doing this, he chaseth far away all tepidity, & negligence.

When

When these hinderances before declared happē, he ought presently to thinke that the diuine bounty is not pleased at that time in the execution of his desire, and therefore he ought to renounce it quite, with protestation that he will haue neyther vertue, nor perfection (I meane, the execution, or act of desire only, for the ground or essence of the desire ought to remaine) but euen such, and in that manner, & when God will giue it; renouncing vtterly al the rest. He ought then to take away all anxiety, and griefe, discouering plainely his selfe loue, & his owne interest, that was hid vnder such desires, although they be holy: & also learn this most high doctrine, which is, that such a desire euen of martyrdome, with this anxiety, although it seeme to be a great thing, commeth to be very base, &

little, for so much as it is selfe-interest, & a hindrance between God and the soule: which being taken away, the desire remayneth as great as euer, and insteed of the anxiety, it is accompanyed with a meruaylous tranquillity in God, and in his diuine Will.

And note well, that the soule that hath such a desire with repose, & tranquillity, without the vertue and perfection desired, is more agreeeble to God then any other who hath such a vertue; which if she had not receaued, or had not attayned vnto, would haue beene much grieued and troubled, seeing that he obtaineth most perfection, who is most conformed to Gods will and pleasure, and exchangeth the vertue created, for the diuine will increated, which doth farre surpasse, and infinitely exceed the other: notwithstanding the desire

will remayne, not with humayne feare, that afflicteth & disquieteth the soule, but with a diuine feare, which is annexed necessarily vnto the desire. For to desire a thing that we cannot haue, bringeth feare, which is accõpanyed with paine, vntill such tyme as it is obtayned: but this is a paine from the which doth proceed a meruaylous contentment, and a resignation vnto God, knowing wel that our Lord is pleased greatly with such a pain, to wit, to see a soule quiet, and full of peace in her payne, to resigne her selfe and accomplish his will, who for to please her Lord, willingly and of her own accord, wil remaine depriued of a good, that she so instantly doth desire, because her loue vnto her Lord, is more then vnto any perfection, or vertue.

In such a soule remaineth ordi-

narily a diuine light, that doth instruct & teach her, what great diligence she ought to vse, without euer relenting, or waxing cold & negligent; but a soule must not rely vpō the same, seeing she doth not come to this that she desireth by her diligence, and industry, how great soeuer it be, but by the will and pleasure of God, who sometymes giueth it, & sometimes not, euen as he best pleaseth. Therfore by reiecting, and loosing all esteeme of our owne diligence, & industry, is gotten a certayne confidence & filiall security, that God, who hath giuen the desire, will also giue the perfection, when he shall please, and according to his will. And thus for his owne part, the soule putteth, and casteth herselfe as a little infant into his armes, and is most contented withall, thinking no more of it, but

with a pure & sincere resignation vnto God, worketh as out of her selfe, and, as we may say, at aduenture leaueth all care of her selfe to our Lord, as a little infant, with a kind of diuine tranquillity.

To this so high renunciation, and disappropriation doth correspond the subtractiō, or withdrawing of our Lord already spoken of, when he doth not giue the vertue we demand, which we ought to admit with ioy, and cooperate in the manner aforesayd. Also there is discouered clearely a conformity with the diuine will, very secret, and knowne but vnto few, seeing that man leaueth God for God, that is to say, leaueth and renounceth God, in as much as he bringeth any selfe interest with vertue, and perfection, to haue him more excellētly, to wit, without any interest. From whence follow-

followeth a moſt high trāsformation, and an admirable Deification, from which is accuſtomed to proceed excellent gifts, and very rare lights, worthy of ſuch a loue, and ſo great vnion with God.

In particuler the aforeſayd doctrine ought to be applied to three ſorts of deſires, beſides the place it hath in all others. The firſt is of eternall glory, in which ſhe ought to be reſigned in the manner before ſpecifyed, when our Lord deferreth it, eſteeming much more of the diuine will, to the end ſhe might entierly forſake al ſelf loue, althogh it be of the moſt excellent good that is.

The ſecond is, the deſire of this anihilation, renoūcing of her ſelfe the conformity with God, which ſhe muſt alſo moderate with the ſelfeſame rule aforeſayd, when our Lord doth not giue it ſo much as

ſhe

she would: where it is well to be noted, that to forsake willingly the loue of the same vertue, which is with anxiety, and superfluous propriety, for the desire to haue the same vertue with satisfaction, and be content to beare the burthen of her imperfectiō against her will, & to conforme her selfe wholy vnto Gods will, is a most great renunciation, and surpasseth all other vertues. And here must be taken away the anxiety, & griefe that we haue to obtaine it: & note well, that the more diligence we shall vse with anxiety, and propriety, for to obtaine it of God, the lesse shall we haue it.

The third is the desire of suffering, althogh our nature repugne, as a thing contrary to sense: it may happen neuertheleſſe, that the desire to haue it, is too great by excesse of anxiety, and selfe loue in

same

the same, as women with child are accustomed to exceed in appetits of dust, coales, and the like things displeasing to tast. Moreouer to suffer for the loue of God, is a thing of this nature that giueth great satisfaction to the soule, for the excellency and highnes thereof, and therefore may be an obiect of selfe loue; but that desire of suffering is most acceptable to God, which is with the foresaid renunciation, and conformity.

Furthermore, they that aspire to the height of perfection, are to be aduertised, that it doth not cōsist (as many thinke) alwayes to haue their thoughts, and affections on a crosse, and in the greatest afflictions that are: for how great feruour soeuer they haue, in the end nature will feele it, and the mind will be afflicted, & such sadnesse will breed a continuall vio-

violence, and difficulty to worke, in the which it seemeth vnto thē, there is great sanctity, and merit; but certainely it is a great hinderance of the same, seeing that euery little thing becometh difficult to a sad soule: and on the contrary cherefulnes asswageth, and lightneth all labour how great soeuer it be.

It is not then the higheſt act of vertue, to desire to suffer, and indure, for this very suffering hath his limits, and ought to be done in measure: but the higheſt act is, a perfect contentment, that riseth from a full and entiere conformity with the diuine Will, causing a most prompt disposition to submit her selfe in all, and by all, to that which God will worke in her, & with her, according to his diuine pleasure. And for that this too great anxiety, to desire to suffer, and

and indure, taketh away ſuch contentment, and hindreth the perfection of operatiõs; the ſoule ought to take away, & cut off the thoghts of croſſes, and paynes, when it is not time to ſuffer, conuerting and changing all into this chereſulnes of conformity with God, to the which, the thinking of pleaſant and delightfull things (ſo they be holy) helpeth much, for that ſuch thinges are conſormable to perfection.

Of this chereſulnes ſpringeth a promptnes to all operations, ſtrength to ſurmount difficulties, and ioy of hart & vnderſtanding, as the Apoſtle ſayth: *Gaudete in Domino ſemper, iterum dico gaudete:* Reioyce in our Lord alwaies, againe I ſay reioice. Agility alſo to take in hand any good worke, facility to execute and end it, and ſweetnes in all things, euen in the croſſe it ſelfe,

selfe, when it is taken only for the loue of God, and to pleaſe him. And if we haue not ſuch cheerfulnes, at the leaſt we ought to deſire it, and inforce our ſelues to haue it in reſiſting al hinderances that the diuell ſhall oppoſe.

Our Lord was ſingularly indued with this alacrity, and ſhewed it in his countenance, rendring himſelfe very amiable, whereby is manifeſt that he thought not alwayes on his paſſion, but that he diuerted and retired his mind and thoughts, except when he knew that it was the will of his Father he ſhould; and thought on ioyfull things with a pleaſant aſpect, and with a ſweet and gracious countenance, accompanyed with grauity and words of weight, to draw the harts of the people with mildnes and authority; and with this alacrity he indured, and ſuffered afterwards

terwardes the ſubtraction, or taking of it away, in the tyme of his paſſion.

THE FIFTH Degree.

CHAP. VIII.

THe ſoule being in this conformity, tranquillity, and cheerfulnes which hath byn ſayd, with progreſſe in perfect vertues. and with great power of the ſuperiour part ouer the inferiour, by reaſon of the long habit, and great facility ſhe hath gotten in repreſſing, and ſubduing the motions of her paſſions; God is wont after this, or when he thinketh good, to permit her to begin to feele great tentations, the like, or greater then thoſe which ſhe ſuffered in the beginning of her cõuerſion, to wit, of the fleſh, of impatience,

of

of feare, of difficultyes, and other the like, in such sort, that she beginneth agayne to feele a great rebellion in her inferior part against the superiour, & the diuel sharply tempteth her, in so much that she is forced to returne to fight, & that with great difficulty: but notwithstanding, the superiour part generously fighteth, gayneth, and beareth away the victory.

This mutation and vnexpected change resembleth the imperfect state of a nouice, or beginner only. The rebellions of the inferiour part agaynst the superiour, the representations of diuells, the motiõs of sensuality, & the newnes vnaccustomed, are as it were against the common stile of grace, that happeneth to vs ordinarily after the first assaultes of temptations, & the victory ouer them, hauing gottẽ the habits of perfect vertues,

and

and in ſuch ſort ſubdued ſenſuali-
ty, that ſcarcely it dare once kick
or repugne. All theſe things are ac-
cuſtomed to put the ſoule in great
perill, of thinking ſhe goeth back-
ward, and that ſhe hath giuen oc-
caſion of her being in ſo euill an
eſtate, whereby is wont to riſe in
her mind vnquietnes, deſpayre, &
great decay of wonted force: and
therfore it behooueth that ſhe ſtād
well vpon her guard, and before
all thinges conſider and obſerue,
that the will, by the grace of God
is reſolute, rather to dye a thouſand
tymes, then to offend God in the
leaſt thing that is. And for that ſin
conſiſteth in the will, ſhe ought
alſo firmely to perſwade her ſelfe,
that ſhe is farre from committing
of it, ſeeing that all her griefe com-
meth of thoſe contrary motions
her will being ſo earneſtly bent
not to offend God. And which is
mor

more, ſhe ought to be ſecure, that ſhe hath not on her part giuen occaſions to ſuch tentations, ſeing that ſhe abhorreth, and deteſteth them greatly: and principally for that ſhe deſireth to conforme herſelfe altogeather to the diuine wil, and to diſappropriate herſelfe of al thinges created. She muſt likewiſe be aduertiſed, that ſhe doth performe this while diuers actes of vertue with the ſuperiour part, for ſo much as hereby through diuine grace the ſpirit is made more vigorous, although the fleſh be moued and incumbred with no ſmall perturbations, and this ſo much the more, for that ſhe ſhall find manifeſtly & aſſuredly, that there is no offence therin: and if ſhe find that ſhe cannot ſufficiently reſolue her ſelfe, for her continuall feares, and remorſe of conſcience, let her remit her ſelfe, and repoſe wholy

on

on the iudgment of him, that hath the guiding of her ſoule.

Moreouer ſhe muſt be aduertiſed, that ſuch temptations, althogh they ſeeme vnto her to be the ſame that ſhe was wont to endure in the beginning, are notwithſtanding very much different, if ſhe conſider the cauſe from whence they proceed: for that then the ſuperiour part being deſtitute of good habits, vertues and graces that giue great ſtrength, and the inferiour part full of euill habits, very ſtrong and ſtubborne, togeather with the fraudulent ſleights of the diuell concurring therin, no meruayle that the fleſh did fight and rebell againſt the ſpirit, vntill ſuch tyme as the ſuperiour part were made ſtrong and vigorous, and our Lord giuing ſtrength to reſiſt, and vanquiſh the inferiour part; which being thus tamed,

the

the battayle ceaſeth ſoone after, with a ſubmiſſion and tranquillility betweene the one and the other; our Lord permitting al this, to the end, that by the way of cõbat, to his imitation, we may obtayne the victory, and alſo by this meanes be made partakers of his celeſtiall gifts and vertues.

But when after all this the tẽptations returne, the ſoule being already fortified, and not hauing giuen any occaſion thereunto, then ſhe muſt aſſuredly know, that this is an expreſſe prouidence of God, who will haue it ſo, and that ſuch temptations doe not take their beginning of the interiour, to wit, of default that is in her, but come of other cauſes: and this great and ſecret inſtruction helpeth much to what end our Lord worketh and permitteth all this. For firſt it is to the end, that the repoſe and peace

that she had before, be not occasion to her of so great satisfaction, and contentment that she come to delight much in herselfe for it, & so be in dãger to fall into pride. Secondly, that selfe-loue which subtilly vseth oftentymes to enter therein, be quite extinguished. Thirdly, that there may increase, & cõtinue in the soule the knowlege of her basenes & little worth. Fourthly, that she may attayne to a new light, and know that perfection doth not consist in being free from temptations and in hauing peace betweene sensuality & reason: for it may so fall out, that these temptations wil be more vehement, then those that she had before, and that she shall suffer much by them, and therefore she ought to hold her self assured, that our Lord by such meanes will bring her to greater vertue.

Wher-

Wherfore when she beginneth to enter into such afflictions or troubles she ought before al things to humble her selfe & descend into her owne nothing, and acknowledge herselfe worthy of all temptations: and in the same manner, as she was already before accustomed, to receyne with contentmẽt the contempt and afflictions outwardly: so ought she to inforce herselfe to reioice in that our Lord is pleased to humble her, and to permit her thus to be buffeted of the diuell. Secondly she ought to be willing to want the peace and repose that she felt when she had no great temptations, and likewise all the contentment which she had therein. And how much the more such repose is a high and excellent good, so much the greater sacrifice it is, & more pleasing vnto God, to be willingly depriued

thereof for the loue of him.

Thirdly, she ought to admit with the same affection, and promptnes, as is spoken of before, the subtraction or withdrawing that our Lord doth vse, which cō-sisteth in this, that he doth not permit the vertue or power of the superiour part, to redound & worke in the inferiour, by giuing it such force as that it shold not feele these temptations: (which would be, if God did concurre therein as before:) but our Lord withdraweth such concourse, and from hence proceedeth anxiety and affliction. Fourthly she ought not to inforce herselfe to driue away these temptations with great pennance and mortification of nature, as she did at the beginning when she was a Nouice, for by that way (as is read of some Saints) the temptations increase rather then otherwise, but

she

she ought to submit herselfe vnto God with humility, for to suffer them willingly, as long as it is in his will & pleasure, and then not to care for them, but to contemne them.

Afterwardes, of this followeth the conformity to the diuine will greater then euer, seeing that to conforme her selfe vnto him, the soule is content to be left comfortlesse, and to suffer such paine and confusion, which is most pleasing to his diuine maiesty: besides that, it is very cõformable to that which our Redeemer did, when being in the garden he would that the inferiour part should find difficulty to suffer, & neuertheless he said, *non mea, sed tua voluntas fiat*, not my will (o Father) but thine be done. And of this conformity riseth in the soule not only a loue of vnion that trãsformeth it into God more

highly, but alſo a loue and deſire of the croſſe, in conformity with our Sauiour, when as to accõpliſh the diuine will, ſhe is content to ſuffer temptation. And heere ſhe doth not only offer, and dedicate herſelfe vnto God, but doth alſo ſacrifice herſelfe vnto him.

THE SIXT Degree.

CHAP. IX.

BESIDES all this that hath beene ſayd, the affliction and payne is accuſtomed to paſſe further, and come euen to the ſuperiour part where vertue and ſpirit make their reſidence. And ſo ſhe ſhall perceaue her ſelfe to fayle & want light in her vnderſtanding, and good purpoſes, and deſires in her affections, promptnes to doe well, ſtrength and patience & the like,

like, in ſuch ſort, as where before ſhe did fight with great force and vigour, now it will ſeeme vnto her, that ſhe is without ſtrength and vertue, and that ſhe cannot reſiſt, and euery little ſtraw will ſeeme vnto her a blocke, and ſo ſhall feele and perceaue nothing but obſcurity, and blindnes, great darkenes, aridity or drineſſe, grief, tepidity, rebellion, puſillanimity, confuſion and great oppreſſion, ſeeming vnto her vnpoſſible to returne to her firſt deſignementes & good purpoſes. And heere in very truth is great danger, if ſhe do not inforce herſelfe to remedy it as ſhe ſhould, to the end ſhe fall not into ſundry great inconueniences, whē ſhe is thus abandoned, which happeneth in diuers manners.

Firſt in apprehēding too firmely all this that hath beene ſpoken of, to be a great miſery, & for this

cauſe afflicting her ſelfe, & growing ſad. Secondly, too earneſt ſetting her ſelfe to thinke of what cauſe they proceed, attributing all to her owne defaults, and inforcing her ſelfe to look curiouſly into them. Thirdly, of ſet purpoſe, procuring with great diligence to free herſelfe of them, to take order to remedy all, and returne to her firſt eſtate, eſteeming the preſent to be miſerable, and yet neuertheleſſe leeſing all this labour: for this being not the true way, nor the remedy of her euill, ſhe findeth the trouble to be thereby increaſed. Fourthly, for this cauſe, the ſoule is accuſtomed to fall into impatience, feare, and puſillanimity & in danger to deſpayre, it ſeeming vnto her that nothing doth help her, and that ſhe goeth from euill to worſe. Suppoſing thē the ſoule to be exerciſed in theſe foreſayd de-

degrees, it is needfull she consider with her selfe, & principally with the help of him that guideth her, the secret and meruaylous mysteries that are hidden herein. For the first thē, let her know that the true cause of all that is sayd, is the diuine prouidence, who willing to make proofe, and to purify a soule, after he hath enriched her with vertues, and great strength in the superiour part, is wont to retire his accustomed succours, without the which these vertues cannot work: wherof it commeth, that although she haue them, yet do they seeme to her that she hath them not: and from hence followeth darkenes, aridity, and other miseries already spoken off; notwithstanding the graces and foresayd vertues remaining in the soule as before.

For the second, this subtraction or diuine withdrawing doth not pro-

proceed of the abſence of vertues, giftes, and graces, ſeeing that they remayne entierly in the ſoule, & it doth leſſe proceed from the acti. on of thē, for ſo much as indeed the ſoule is depriued thereof. But we muſt conſider that in internal and ſpirituall actions, there is a direct act, that tendeth directly to God, to wit, the ſame internall act or operation touching his obiect: as for example, the practicall knowledge and election, or lawfull deſire, to haue a wil to ſuffer, to haue a will to loue God, to haue a will to be temperate, chaſt, obedient, not to conſent vnto ſin &c. There is alſo the act reflectiue, that turneth towardes it ſelfe, to wit, to diſcerne & iudge whether he doth ſuch an act, whereby he may receaue contentment, and reioyce therein for the glory of God, for that he diſcerneth himſelfe by the ſame

same to be strong, and victorious ouer temptations, with great repose of the soule.

Of these two, the first is the pure act of vertue: the secõd is the fruit that redoundeth in vs, & the fruition of the same vertue: & this is most cleare that the act of temperance doth not consist to perceaue that he hath it, or to reioyce in it, or content himselfe therein, but to desire it, and effectuate it. Now God concurreth in the first, and by that meanes the acts of vertue are performed, but he withdraweth the second, to wit, our knowledge, reflection, iudgment, and satisfaction to haue done thẽ, and therfore it seemeth to vs, that we do them not, & in the place of the knowledge withdrawne, happeth darknes & blindnes, in place of the ioyfull affection succeedeth aridity & dryneſſe: euen as it hap-

neth to him that is almoſt ſtarued, who receyuing food into his ſtomacke neyther feeleth nor taſteth it: it is cleare that he eateth, and notwithſtanding it ſeemeth vnto him he eateth not, and hath in a manner no more ſatisfaction of ſuch an act, then if he had not done it. Seeing then that it is not properly vertue to perceaue our interiour actions, and that therin doth not conſiſt vertuous effects and operations, being only ſatisfaction vnto our ſelues, our Lord pretending to bereaue vs of all our proper taſt & intereſt, as a hinderance betwixt him & vs, leaueth vs the purity of vertue, which is no other thing but to deſire it, & put it in effect, and taketh away the ſecond, which is a certayne ſelfeloue more ſubtile then thoſe that haue yet beene ſpecifyed, & an intereſt with the which the ſoule nouriſheth

sheth it selfe, and such as diuerteth vs from greater vnion with God: and this being so, it is plainely to be seene, that there is not only no euill heerin, nor any danger to be feared, but that the soule by such a diuine work is purifed the more in vertue, and is purged from all proprieties, and selfe interest, although it be very hidden, and is rayſed to a degree, and disposition of greater grace, & much more vnion with God then before. For to make all this manifest, the soule that is come to this estate, must be aduertised of two pointes. The first, that if she will examine the purity of vertue, she shall see the same in her actions more then euer she did. For if one should demaund of her in these griefes, obscurities and rebellions, if she would offend God, she would presently answere, that she

ſhe had rather dy a thouſād deaths then to commit the leaſt ſinne & imperfection. If any ſhould aske her, whether ſhe would cōforme her ſelfe vnto the diuine will, ſhe would ſay, that ſhe greatly deſired it, and now more then euer, in ſuch ſort, that ſhe would willingly dy for Gods honour and glory. The like would ſhe ſay if ſhe were demanded, whether ſhe deſired to better her eſtate, to know her defaultes, to amend her life, whether ſhe deſired the hatred of her ſelfe, the loue of God, & of perfection; and finally concerning the exteriour actes of vertue, ſhe notwithſtanding all the afflictions leaueth not in tyme to accompliſh with attention all that which ſhe is accuſtomed, and to giue her ſelfe to the entire obſeruance of her vocation, which is an euident ſigne, that the pure vertue is not one whit

whit relented or diminished, but is more excellent: although the soule be destitute, and depriued of the tast of vertue, which was wont to ayd her. The second point is, to discerne the difference of such an estate, from that in which the soule felt the like griefs and obscurities in the beginning, but by her fault and negligence, for so much as then she lost the actes of vertue, and the desire of perfection; and if by chaunce she felt any, they were wholly without operation and efficacy: and in that state the soule leaueth the great good that before she had attained vnto, going from euill to worse, with danger of her ruine.

She ought also to marke the marueilous height of this estate, besides that which hath byn said: first because this is a liuely and excellent imitation of our Lord and Saui-

Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt, of whom it is written in the beginning of his dolorous paſſion: *Cœpit pauere, tædere, & mœſtus eſſe*; that is to ſay, he began to be troubled, to feare, and became ſad: and after he ſaid, *Triſtis eſt anima mea vſque ad mortem*, my ſoule is ſorrowfull euen vnto death. Now we muſt conſider three pointes. Firſt the greatnes of the paine & torments that he was preſently to endure. Secondly that then was withdrawne from him the concurrence of ſtrength, patience, magnanimity, & the like vertues, concerning the feeling of them in the manner aforeſaid, and for that cauſe he preſently fell into ſo great anguiſh, feare, & heauines, that the leaſt of his ſorrowes ſeemed vnto him inſupportable, wherof before he reioiced ſo much in thinking of them, ſaying: *Baptiſmo habeo baptizari, & quomodo co-*

arctor

arctor vsque dum perficiatur: I haue to be baptized with a Baptisme, & how am I straitened vntill it be dispatched. Thirdly, that with all this, the stedfastnes of vertue was most firme & more stable thē euer, seeing that in these words to his Apostles, *Surgite, eamus*, arise, let vs go (that is, to meet them that came to apprehend him), he discouered a meruailous promptnes to suffer, patience, strength, and a generosity of hart, not to be ouercome or quailed by such a withdrawing or subtraction before mentioned: by which the holy Doctors say, that our Lord merited then for the holy Martyrs & other Saints, who in their torments and paines were so richly armed with patience, strength, magnanimity & other vertues in the superiour part, that by the same vertues they did so triumph, & reioyce euen in the mid-

middeſt of their paines & torméts, as we read of many holy Martyrs. When thé, it ſhall pleaſe our Lord to take away, & bereaue a ſoule, for the loue he beares it, of this garment, with the foreſaid ſubtraction, or withdrawing, as he doth in this eſtate; then it is cleare, that he bringeth her to a higher imitation of himſelfe, then was the other, ſeeing that the ſame ſubtraction was vſed to him by his eternall Father.

And beſides this reaſon of the moſt liuely imitation of our Lord there followeth others alſo, to wit, that how much the ſuperior part is more noble then the inferiour, or then the body: ſo much more the ſuffering of it, or both together, is more noble then any martyrdome whatſoeuer of body only, if it be without the other. And moreouer to ſuffer with this fre-

fredom & liberty, or ſenſible force of vertue, with which the Martyrs were indued was as eaſye vnto them, as if they had bene in the middeſt of roſes. But with this ſubtractiō or withdrawing it ſeemeth not only difficult, but alſo impoſſible. So that with all this difficulty to be thus magnanimous, and couragious with all efficacy, maketh vs more apt, and prepared for higher vertue, and greater merit. And finally to find our ſelues ſo freely & highly rayſed vnto vertue, naturally it is an occaſion of perill & danger of pride: wherfore vnto *S Paul* (*Ne magnitudo reuelationum extolleret eum*, leaſt the greatnes of his reuelatiōs ſhould extoll him) there was giuē to preſerue him the temptation of the fleſh, ſo to counterpoiſe the daunger which might follow: by this height of vertue the ſoule is plun-

plunged into this extreme low eſtate, by the feeling which ſhe hath of troubles & feares &c. And therfore ſhe is ſecure, that is, ſhe is preſerued from danger, which is a ſigne of higher eſtate, for that ſhe hath a great foundation of humility, and knowledg of her owne baſenes. This as it ſeemeth, may be gathered of the temptation of *S. Paul*, which was giuen him for auoyding the perill wherin he was: wherof it followeth, that the hauing of that temptation of the fleſh, was a higher eſtate, then the firſt, ſeeing that by this meanes the hinderances and imperfections of the firſt are taken away, and he is made more ſecure therby, in ſuch ſort, as this eſtate is a certaine probation, that God maketh of his elect, a liuely imitation of our Lord and Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt, a more excellent Martyrdome,

dome, then the exteriour,& founded vpon profound humility, which is more sure then any other whatsoeuer, and is of greater merit; and a disposition to receiue greater gifts & graces, & which is more, an enemy to proper loue; for that it taketh away the satisfaction and contentment that is receaued of vertues, and so by consequence increaseth, & commeth to be of greater conformity with the diuine will, & is enkindled more in loue towards God, then the others before mentioned: seeing, that for to satisfy Almighty God, a man depriueth himselfe of so great a good, and remayneth with the pure actes of vertues, naked of all sensible ornaments, and self contentment.

That which ought after wardes to be practised, is: First for so much as the diuell is wōt to trou-

ble

ble the ſoule with many thoughtes, as if all this happened for ſome great defaults, that were in her (which afflicteth her much:) to deliuer her ſelfe from this, ſhe ought to repent herſelf of all her defects, ſinnes, and occaſions that ſhe may haue giuē in this caſe, but in generall, without any more thinking therof; and the reſt, to remit herſelfe wholy vnto her Superiour, belieuing in all things his aduiſe, and renouncing her owne iudgment, keeping her ſelfe in peace, and repoſe of conſcience, ſuppoſing this maxime, which is greatly neceſſary in this ſixt degree, to wit, that a man ought not to iudge of himſelfe, nor of what he feeleth in himſelfe, ſeing that that the ſubtraction maketh that he can haue no light, reflection, nor perfect iudgmēt of his actiōs; but he ought to content himſelfe,

and

and reioyce in this darknes, and aridity, and ought to humble and submit himself to the iudgment of another, anihilating & acknowledging himselfe worthy of this, and so much worse, vnworthy of all light, and in such basenes he ought to glorify God.

Although that the motions of impatience, and other the like naturall motions be great, and make the soule to become sad and melancholy, without feeling any comfort, or solace; yet must she know, and labour for, & to trie by experience, the forsaid submission, which doth also consist in resigning, & remitting her self wholy vnto God, euen as one that is sick, who althogh he cry throgh the vehemency of his paines, neuertheless in will, is submitted entirely vnto God, and is content to suffer any thing.

As

As for feare & puſillanimity (beſides that which naturally ſhe feeleth, which is not euil of it ſelf) ſhe ought not to admit any more, nor to conſent vnto it, but ought to endeauour herſelf to performe acts of ſubmiſſion, confidence in God, familiarity, & the like.

And doing all this that is aboue ſaid, and with the ſame, denying herſelf in all things, and conforming herſelfe vnto God, not willing any thing, but what he willeth, if ſhe feele theſe troubles, and darknes to increaſe, ſhe muſt not for all that, be afflicted for any thing whatſoeuer it be; but without any kind of murmuring, ſhe muſt ſeeke to forget her euill, & ought to know that God is accuſtomed to doe this: that is to ſay, to withdraw all conſolation and help in our temptations. Therfore ſhe muſt then redouble her

her conformity & thanksgiuing vnto God, and quiet herſelfe, and repoſe with aſſurance that in the end God will not leaue her, nor permit that ſhe be tempted aboue her ſtrength, which heere doth cõſiſt wholy in reſiſtance againſt them, or putting them away, ſeeing that is not ſo much in our power by reaſon of the ſubtraction: but in this, to ſuffer and ſupport them; & this is more ſure & perfect, then extaſy.

OF THE SECOND Eſtate.

CHAP. X.

WHo would thinke, that there ſhold be any thing yet left in the Soule which ſhe might renounce, forſake & withdraw her ſelfe from, beſides this that hath bene ſaid, & eſpecially

the ſoule being brought to the only pure and direct act of vertue, in the which it ſeemeth there is nothing but true vertue, & alſo bereaued of all proper intereſt. But if we conſider that ſuch an act although it be thus purged, is a pure act of election, and of our will, the which, with his actiue vertue imperatiue, in reſpect of the other powers, worketh and produceth the acts of vertue; it cannot be denyed, but that there is proper will, and intereſt therin, although much purged, and by conſequẽce there is ſomwhat yet to forſake, and to be purged.

The ſoule then that is left without any other action but to doe in the manner aboue explicated, being ariued to the foreſaid ſixt degree, our Lord is accuſtomed to withdraw by little, and little, the power to do ſuch actes, taking

taking now one, now another vntill such tyme, that indeed he taketh away all, except the power to conforme her selfe vnto the diuine will. And by experience it is proued, that somtymes the soule findeth her selfe so oppressed with griefes and afflictions, and assayled with so many distractions, & miseries, that willing to enforce herselfe, yet she cannot performe any act, neyther of thákes giuing towards God, nor of fortitude, nor of patience, nor of any other vertue, no not so much as to will that which is aggreable vnto God. And she must remaine in this sufferance, pierced through inwardlie with a thousand temptations: so that as the Martyrs could not defend themselues, from their torments & wounds, but receiuing them, conformed themselues to the diuine will: euen so must the

ſoule doe in this caſe, in whom it may be, there remayneth not any actiue force, but only the paſſiue, enduring all for the loue of God, and remaining content with the ſame.

But which is more, he is accuſtomed alſo to take away ſuch an act of conforming herſelfe to the diuine will, in ſuch manner, that ſhe hath not any ſenſible feeling to do it, & alſo leſſe can ſhe execute it: and there remayneth no other thing, but a paſſiue tranquillity, by which, as a lambe before the ſhearer, ſhe remaineth quiet, and ſuffereth God to accompliſh whatſoeuer he pleaſeth.

This is an entire and abſolute ſubtraction of the actiue power of the ſoule, to wit, that God withdraweth in ſuch ſort his diuine concurrence that the ſoule cannot in the ſuperiour part, how holy

or

or raiſed ſoeuer ſhe be, make any actiue operations, but only can remaine peaceable, & quiet, enduring willingly that which God permitteth to happen vnto her.

To ſuch a withdrawing the ſoule ought to be correſpondent with anihilating and acknowledging herſelfe to be pure nothing, and full of infinit ſinnes, and therfore vnworthy to performe any action of vertue: and ſhe ought to reioyce in ſuch contempt, that God worketh in her, taking from her the power to lift her hart vp vnto him, with a free renunciation; ſhe ought to be contented to want wholy the actiue, and all the acts of vertue; the which how much more they were pure, ſo much greater is the gift that God imparteth therin. After this it often happeneth, that the troubles and afflictions willbe not only as

before, but much greater, for hauing loſt the rampire and fortreſſe of the actes of vertue: and moreouer in the concupiſcible and inferiour part, there wilbe raiſed motions ſo vehement and diſordered, that ſhe neuer felt the like in her life, in ſuch ſort, as it will ſeeme vnto her, that ſhe is euen in hell it ſelfe: and heere ſhe muſt not arme herſelfe with any other armour, then with ſubmiſſion and paſſiue tranquillity in ſupporting all to ſatisfy almighty God, who will haue it ſo. And ſhe ought to know, that ſuch ſubmiſſion and tranquillity giueth to the ſoule a very great ſtrength, not actiue but paſſiue, by the which he giueth and leaueth herſelfe to be as a prey vnto God; and ſo like a moſt patient lambe ſuffereth all, in great debility & feeblenes. Of this peace and tráquillity followeth a comfor-

formity with the actiue will, although passiue, but without comparison greater then the foresaid, and an inexplicable deification in an act yet passiue, not of oblation, nor of gift, dedication, or holocaust, but much more excellent & more perfect, as to giue themselues wholy, as it were a prey vnto almighty God.

In this estate she must be aduertised of some things of much importance: one is, that the interiour, and imperatiue actions of vertue are not lost, but are made more actiue then euer, in such sort that a person hath strength to worke and exercise the partes and powers of her body and soule in speaking, thinking, and doing, all that is conuenient to be done, according to her vocation, yea euen in performing acts of temperance, patience &c. Also when she ought

to ayd and help her neighbour, it is with the accuſtomed affability: for the act of commaundment, & practice reſteth in the ſoule, to commaund, and to direct all her actions of commaund or execution. For the ſubtraction, or withdrawing ought to bee vnderſtood in the vnderſtanding and will, concerning the proper interiour acts of the will, intention, fruitiõ, election, reioycing, ſatiſfaction, & the like, which indeed are taken away.

Another is, that it muſt not be vnderſtood, that our Lord taketh away the gifts, or habits, but the acts, not giuing his help & concurrence, notwithſtanding he doth not ſo alwaies: for that often in this eſtate, he letteth the ſoule be free, and at liberty to worke, but ſometymes he ſuſpendeth it, and this is done without any certaine

taine rule, and when he pleaſeth. Therfore the ſoule ought to be wholy reſigned, to be depriued of all acts, or not, as much, and when it ſhall pleaſe God, and to be alwaies ready to renounce thē with this admirable indifferency. When the actiue is taken away in the manner aforeſaid, then the ſoule remaineth in the paſſiue ſtate in two ſorts. Firſt, for that with promptnes, & great tranquillity ſhe ſubmitteth herſelfe to all the afflictions, and foreſaid troubles, and miſeries, induring them moſt willingly, although ſhe be tranſpierced, and wounded by them, for the great reſolution ſhe hath made rather to ſuffer a thouſand deaths, then to offend God, and for that ſhe ſuffereth ſo many euill motions: and alſo for that ſhe cannot performe any act of vertue, but only ſuffereth ſuch

affliction for the loue of God.

Secondly, the ſoule in ſuch eſtate being retyred to the deepeſt part of her hart, (which the Myſticall Deuines call *Pax anima*, the peace of the ſoule) operatiõ being withdrawne, ſhe giueth and ſubmitteth herſelf with great prõptnes vnto God, who worketh within with the paſſiue conſent of her freewill, much more higher acts, then of thanks-giuing, loue, vnion with him, election, or any other vertue, without taſt; only admitting them, and cooperating with all her hart, and affection, in ſuch ſort, that as the vnderſtanding retyred from the ſenſe in extaſy cannot be attentiue with her naturall forces to actiue vertues, as ſhe was before, but receiueth diuine light, that worketh moſt high vnderſtanding & knowledg in her (which the myſticall Deuines

nes call *pati diuina*:) now if in the vnderstanding rayſed aboue her naturall forces, our Lord worketh this, the ſame may be done, much more in the will, when renouncing wholy the actiue, ſhe forſaketh the ſame, & then our Lord raiſing it into an extaſy, & a moſt vertuous practiſe, worketh in her entirely what he pleaſeth: and this *pati diuina*, which is an eſtate much higher then the foreſaid, for that extaſy of the vnderſtanding is dangerous, and few attaine vnto it, full of infinite occaſions and ſubiects of curioſity, & propriety: but heere the will renounceth and hũmbleth herſelfe, and with a moſt aſſured confidẽce ſubmitteth herſelfe vnto God: and of ſuch an extaſy all are capable, and it is much higher then the other, rendring the ſoule moſt aggreable and pleaſing vnto God.

OF THE THIRD *and laſt Eſtate.*

CHAP. XI.

FINALLY our Lord is accuſtomed to take away not only the actiue, but alſo the foreſaid paſſiue, the will remayning in all, and by all, naked and impotent for any thing. It is true, ſhe doth not reſiſt, or oppoſe her ſelfe to this, but ſhe ſuffereth herſelfe to be bereaued of all. And for the vnderſtanding of this laſt Eſtate, which is the higheſt of all the others, it muſt be noted, that the vertue and force of the liberty which the will hath, is ſo great, that ſhe can renounce wholy her will, and wholy her liberty, and indeed bereaueth herſelfe of them, as if ſhe neuer had them; and ſhe doth this freely with her good

will

will: and by such a renunciation the will is made as it were no wil, in the like manner, as *S. Paulinus* made himselfe a slaue to deliuer another slaue: euen so the soule hath power to doe with her interiour, and with her free will and liberty.

Then our Lord taketh away the actiue, and the passiue by subtraction, and all acts whatsoeuer, as if she were not at all: and she doth not resist this, but with an entire exhibition of such a renunciation, concurring therwith, cõmeth to be no practicall will, to wit, that all the operations that she doth, or can doe concerning herselfe, she doth not will them, nor doth them as of herself: yet willing them neuertheless with a will conformable to the diuine will, in which sort she willeth & worketh them; and therfore she doth

doth them as commaunded immediatly by the diuine will, without bringing therin any concurrence of her owne, putting the will of God in the place of hers.

For in as a large & ſpacious Pallace, of the which one only is maiſter, when he is abſent, he leaueth ſome friend of his, abſolute mayſter, and there is done all, that was done before, but only by the commaundement of the friend, & not of the other: euen ſo the will renouncing it ſelfe wholy, aſwell in the actiue as in the paſſiue, although pure, & holy, not willing but what God willeth; and now not willing indeed neyther more nor leſſe, to haue this ſatisfaction, as is afore ſayd, ſhe renounceth in all thinges, and wholy the ſayd actiue and paſſiue, being reſolued not to worke at all, as with her will, notwithſtanding ſhe doth al

euen

euen as before, but as thinges willed & ordeyned by God, not of herſelfe, leauing entirely & imediatly to the good pleaſure of God, the commaundment of her body, ſoule, actions, motions, and feelings, as if truely ſhe had no māner of will: and to this God correſpondeth as is ſayd, with the withdrawing of all acts: & if peraduenture ſhe leaueth, or doth the like acts of vertue as before, then ſhe leaueth and doth them, not according to her proper will, but for ſo much as ſhe ſeeth the will of God to be, that ſhe leaue, or doe them. Our Lord and maiſter himſelfe made this ſubtraction & renunciation in the garden, when he ſayd, *non mea, ſed tua voluntas fiat:* O Father, not my will be done, but thine: to wit, my will would, as conformable to thine, Eternall Father, ſuffer croſſe, and torments

with

with great purity and admirable ſanctity, but I renounce all this: & concerning ſufferance, I deſire & will it, not for that my will (although moſt holy) willeth and deſireth it, but only for that thine would haue it ſo; and I renounce wholy myne. And thus it becometh not a free will, and therfore I ſay, *non mea ſed tua voluntas*, let my will be no will, for to giue place to thine. Heere the anihilation, depriuation, and ſubtraction ſhineth meruaylouſly, the e being not only conformity heerein, but ſomewhat that is much greater and higher, for that the will with ſuch a renunciation linketh and tyeth herſelfe, diueth, & Is as it were drowned in God, and as a thing wholy toſt in it ſelfe, remaineth in the will of God, greatly Deifyed, by being totally the ſame, and vnited vnto it.

HEERE

HEERE FOLLOWETH THE LADDER OF PERFECTION.

THE FIRST EXERCISE of Anihilation.

The Prayer preparatory accuſtomed, ought to be made before the Exerciſe.

IN the beginning we muſt imagine, that euē as the wicked ſpirit repreſented to our Lord the world, with al the Kingdomes and greatnes of the ſame, with a deſire to haue deceaued him, if it had beene in his

his power: in the ſame manner he inforceth himſelfe, and ſeeketh as much as he can to deceaue vs, as often as he repreſenteth and putteth before vs, any proper intereſt or commodity of ours: and as our Lord caſt him off, and vanquiſhed him, in refuſing all things, & not admitting any thing, ſo ought we to ouercome him, and driue him away by the meanes of a perfect anihilation of will, and to pray vnto our Lord, by this his holy & entiere renunciation he will giue vs his grace to obtaine full and entire victory ouer the diuell & ſin.

The firſt point.

MAN, & whatſoeuer is created concerning their firſt origen, proceedeth of nothing; & of himſelfe, by a thouſand wayes, to wit, by infinite myſeries of ſoule and

and body (to the which he is ſubiect) is ready, and tending to returne to the ſame nothing, if God by his boũty did not cõſerue him; and a man ſinning is made worſe then nothing. By the meanes of this conſideration of this our firſt origen, and of all thinges created, we muſt endeauour or eſteem our ſelues, and all thinges created as nothing, and not to loue, deſire, ſeeke, or will any thing for our ſelues: and thus we ſhall get a perfect anihilation of our will.

The ſecond point.

VVE muſt conſider, that this true anihilatiõ maketh the ſoule to become a true portraict and reſemblance of the ſoueraygne greatnes of God, for that it taketh away the hindrances that are betweene God and the ſoule

ſoule; which is done by not willing, or deſiring any thing: and thus ſhe becometh a moſt faire, & cleare mirrour or looking-glaſſe. For euen as when we would, that a glaſſe ſhould receyue in it ſelfe perfectly and entierely the image & figure of ſome obiect, it is needfull, that ſo much the further the one be ſet from the other, as the obiect is greater in it ſelfe; ſo the greatnes of God being infinite, by the meanes of this anihilation, the ſoule only taketh from it ſelfe all obſtacles that do hinder it from vniting it ſelfe with God; but which is more, by a great ſubmiſſiō in her baſenes, & a true knowledge of the infinite greatnes of God, ſhe draweth herſelfe infinitely far from the ſame, and by this meanes commeth to be diſpoſed, and able to receyue in her this infinit obiect of God; and the ſame

Lord

Lord by the pleasure he taketh, & infinit loue that he beareth to this soule, imprinteth and engraueth presently in her, a true resemblāce image, & portraict of all his greatnes, euen to the last Center of the same.

This anihilation is of great force to purge the soule of passions, taking away entierely al the obiects of them, seeing that he that hath no will to any thing for himselfe, hath not what to desire, loue, feare, or hate: whereof commeth also that it purifyeth the soule, concerning the intention, taking away all pretence of any created end whatsoeuer in all our actions, & maketh it truly capable to haue no will to any other thing then to the pure glory of God in himselfe, seeing she careth for nothing els; frō whence also proceedeth an entire and totall victory ouer all temptations,

tations; seeing that vnto him that desireth nothing, the diuell hath not any obiect to present: and if he doth, he is presently reiected, and driuen away with this resolution of not desiring any thing, & by this meanes he is in all thinges vanquished and put to flight. The affects and principall signes of this anihilation are these that follow.

The first is, that the gifts & graces that our Lord communicateth to the soule that is endued therewith, she receiueth them not, nor retayneth them in herselfe, for so much as that which is nothing cānot receyue in it selfe any thing, but receaueth them in God, & referreth thē vnto him from whome they proceed.

Secondly, that she doth not appropriate thē to herselfe, nor reioice in such graces in herselfe, neyther is she troubled if they be taken from

from her, or that she happen to loose them; but equally, whether she hauing them or no, she remayneth content in her nothing.

Thirdly, she maketh no accompt of this grace, but for so much as our Lord wilbe serued by the meanes of the same.

Fourthly, she doth not esteeme the grace in it selfe, but for that by the meanes of it, she commeth to a greater knowledge of the giuer, and esteemeth him the more.

Fiftly, she doth not exalt herselfe for any gift or grace that she can receaue, but alwayes keeping herselfe in her nothing, remaineth in the same conceipt, and opinion of her basenes.

Sixtly, in the workes that she doth, she knoweth truly that of herselfe she doth nothing, but discouereth in a high manner the diuine assistance in them, and that it

is

is he which worketh all, & whatsoeuer happeneth vnto her, although neuer so grieuous & hard to support, yet with an entire peace she reposeth in him.

Seauenthly, in the tyme of subtraction, and dryneſſe of spirit, she is not mooued with it, neither seeketh any remedy, or consolation, but with all submission imbraceth it, and giueth herselfe in prey vnto it, as vnto a proper obiect of nothing.

THE EXERCISE of Disappropriation.

The Prayer preparatory accustomed.

FIRST we must consider how truly was verified in our Lord IESVS Christ, that which he said of himselfe:

selfe: *Vulpes foueas habent, & volucres cæli nidos, filius autem hominis non habet vbi caput suum reclinet*; that is to say: the foxes haue holes, and the birdes of the ayre their nests, but the sonne of the virgin hath not where to repose his head; and how much are we obliged to seeke with al our power, to imitate him in disappropriating our selues of all things, for to answere the infinite loue he beareth vnto vs. Secondly, we must pray vnto our Lord with great feruour that he would impart vnto vs this grace: and we must make a firme & constant resolution to be willing to accept it, with all our hart & affection, & to dispose our selues perfectly, & wholy to the exercise, and execution of all that it requireth of vs.

The first point.

VVE must consider, that this disappropriation is a resolute will, that cõmeth from God, to be willing to be entierly depriued, cõcerning our affection, and, as much as possibly is conuenient, in effect also of all that we haue, and this because there redoũdeth therby greater glory vnto God. And by this is vnderstood that we must depriue & disappropriate our selues, not ōly of al created things, in as much as they nourish, & intertayne in vs selfe-loue, and all other faultes, and imperfections that may be found in vs: but which is more, we must also depriue our selues of that which toucheth vs nearer, euen of vertues, and graces that we receaue of God, of all satisfactiō, cõtentment,

con-

consolation, & of any other good, that by the meanes of them we may attribute to our selues, resigning all this truly vnto God, not desiring in them, nor in any liuing thing, other tast and contentmét, then that his holy will be entierly and fully accomplished in vs and all persons. And in the end being depriued of all proper interest, and the vertues, and celestiall graces remayning in vs, euen in their purity and perfection, we then ought to acknowledge our selues most vnworthy of them: & the more perfect they be, so much the more do they belong vnto our Lord. And therefore with an entire, and perfect resignation we ought most freely to offer them vnto him in this their naturall purity, simplicity and perfection, remitting them vnto their first origen. And moreouer we must be

[illegible]d to depriue our [illegible] & ver-

[illegible]

[illegible] our Lord to ordayne, and [illegible] his loue, and for his greater glory and honour.

The second point.

[illegible]His perfect disappropriatiō or renunciation, is a depen[illegible] and participation of the di[illegible] which is infinitely proper to God [illegible] we may so say: and neuer-theless concerning the affection, our Lord depriueth himselfe, with a meruaylous great and excellent perfection, of al that he hath, with peace, tranquillity, repose of spirit, and infinit magnanimity. This we see in God the Father, who really communicateth himself to the Sonne,

Sonne, and Holy Ghost: & which is more in effect, he communicateth his gifts vnto vs in creation, conseruation & his graces, as he doth impart them to all his Creatures, not omitting sinnes. And in the [illegible] of the Incarnation, and in [illegible]ther mysteries of our redemption, we see how he debaseth himselfe in thinges most base, disappropriating, and depriuing himselfe of the contrary perfections. And then when so many Angells departed from him, and so many soules yet doe the same, incurring eternal damnation, he depriueth himselfe of them, and of so many graces which he hath imparted to them: we see in him the same disappropriation also in infinite other manners which cannot be explicated. Of this may be gathered, that this is a most high perfection to imitate God himselfe in

alwayes prepared to depriue our ſelues of all giftes, graces, & vertues, as if it were to giue, & make a preſent of them, vnto any creature whoſoeuer, as it ſhall pleaſe our Lord to ordayne, and this for his loue, and for his greater glory and honour.

The ſecond point.

THIS perfect diſappropriatiõ or renunciation, is a dependance, and participation of the diuine, which is infinitely proper to God, if we may ſo ſay: and neuertheleſſe concerning the affection, our Lord depriueth himſelfe, with a meruaylous great and excellent perfection, of al that he hath, with peace, tranquillity, repoſe of ſpirit, and infinit magnanimity. This we ſee in God the Father, who really communicateth himſelf to the

Sonne,

Sonne, and Holy Ghoſt: & which is more in effect, he communicateth his gifts vnto vs in creation, conſeruation of his graces, as he doth impart them to all his Creatures, & in permitting ſinnes. And in the worke of the Incarnation, and in all other myſteries of our redemption, we ſee how he debaſeth himſelfe in thinges moſt baſe, diſappropriating, and depriuing himſelfe of the contrary perfections. And then when ſo many Angells departed from him, and ſo many ſoules yet doe the ſame, incurring eternal damnation, he depriueth himſelfe of them, and of ſo many graces which he hath imparted to them: we ſee in him the ſame diſappropriation alſo in infinite other manners which cannot be explicated. Of this may be gathered, that this is a moſt high perfection to imitate God himſelfe in

foreſaid manner, by the means of ſuch a diſappropriation.

The principall effects that this diſapropriation worketh, and produceth in the ſoule, are theſe that follow.

Firſt, that the gifts that ſhe receyueth of God, ſhe receaueth and vſeth them, as if ſhe had not receaued them, not putting any affection in thē, but offering the loue which ſhe might haue to them, & the gifts of God themſelues to him from whome they proceed.

Secondly, that ſhe reioyceth in the gifts that ſhe ſeeth in another, although ſhe hath them not herſelfe, as if they were her owne.

Thirdly, it maketh her ready and prompt to depriue herſelfe of the graces and giftes which ſhe hath receaued, to enrich her neighbour therewith, and ſhe reioyceth much in this.

Fourth-

Fourthly, when she findeth herselfe depriued of all giftes, aswell spirituall as corporall, and of all graces in what manner soeuer, she remayneth also content, as if she had not receaued them, and is not troubled, nor disquietted any thing at all. She knoweth well all her necessities, and miseryes, but neuertheles she contenteth herselfe in them, knowing truly that she hath nothing of herselfe, and that nothing appertaineth vnto her, being vnworthy of any thing.

THE EXERCISE of Indifferency.

The Prayer preparatory, as accuſtomed.

FIRST, we muſt profoundly thinke of the ſenſe of theſe words, *Sedere ad dexteram meam & ſiniſtram, non eſt meum dare vobis, ſed quibus paratum eſt à Patre meo*: that is to ſay: To ſit at my right hand, and left, is not myne to giue you, but to whome it is prepared of my Father. And how much more in reaſon are we obliged to be in all thinges ſubiect, and to remit our ſelues wholy to the good pleaſure of God by the meanes of a perfect & totall indifferency?

We muſt demaund humbly this grace

grace of our Lord, with firme resolution, willingly to accept of it, and to put in execution the diuine inspirations by which we may be conducted & guided to the same.

The first Point.

FIRST, Consider that this indifferency is a most excellent, diuine, and high perfection, for that, although our Lord be of nature, and of will most resolute to all that he will doe, and to all that which he doth, neuertheleſſe concerning his affection, he is wholy prepared to doe, or not to doe any worke whatsoeuer, if it were so conuenient for him, and if he had, or might haue any superiour of whome he depended; and moreouer concerning the effect, we see that he doth put in execution this diuine indifferency, in communi-

cating his giftes vnto all creatures, although different amongſt themſelues, as is ſeene in perſons of diuerſityes of wills and humors, according as is written : *Pluit ſuper iuſtos & iniuſtos*, that is to ſay, he maketh it to rayne vpon the iuſt and vniuſt, in giuing ſometymes as much grace to a ſoule that hath committed many ſinnes in her life tyme, as he doth to another who hath not cõmitted ſo many, bringing them both to equall glory, not ceaſing to loue her, to mooue her vnto good, and to impart new graces dayly vnto her, thereby to draw her vnto himſelfe, & by infinite other wayes, although ſuch a ſoule by reaſon of her ingratitude is vnworthy of ſuch graces as our Lord worketh in her.

The

The second point.

VVE must consider, that this indifferency in vs, is a dependance, and participation of the forsaid, by the means whereof we are prepared to receyue frō the hand of God all thinges, although neuer so contrary in themselues, for to accomplish the will of God, in what manner so euer it be, and euen then, when he withdraweth from vs all the graces, which we perceaued we had before, & all things that might bring vs any contentment, and satisfaction. The effects and fruites of this indifferency are these that follow. First, that the soule endued herewith, addresseth the eyes of her spirit to consider attentiuely, and in very deed is attentiue to execute al whatsoeuer God will do with her.

Secondly, this indifferency causeth one to haue a great & magnanimous courage, & by it we are disposed, and made prompt, and prepared to all thinges: and of this springeth a sincerity of hart, that maketh the loue of God to increase in the soule.

Thirdly, the soule that is indifferent, accepteth, and with all her forces consenteth to, all that God will worke in her, and with great promptnes putteth it in execution, although it seeme vnto her troublesome, sharp, grieuous, and vneasy to support, repugnant to her inclination, and her proper iudgement, or of what sort soeuer it be: in which oftentymes many soules doe fayle euen of spirituall persons, who for want of this indifferency, and deceaued by selfe loue, doe hinder oftentimes that which God would work in them.

Fourth-

Fourthly, it maketh the soule prepared to liue or dye, to receaue consolation or affliction, and to take all thinges in good part, that can happen eyther to herselfe, or others, and all the vniuersall miseryes which our Lord permitteth to happen in his Church. Briefly she receaueth all thinges equally, & in one manner, from the hand of God.

Fiftly, what thing soeuer she hath she setteth not her affection thereon, how good, or spirituall soeuer it be, in which many soules willingly stumble, proposing vnto themselues in their actions, a good intention truly in it selfe, but according to their fashion, and make great accompt of certayne exercises that they doe, and which they much esteeme. But the soule indifferent, setting all things aside, harkneth, considereth, and studi-

eth

eth with great diligence, how to follow, and put in execution the pure, and true interiour motions of grace, and diuine inſpirations, and to doe whatſoeuer ſhe knoweth may redound to the greateſt honour & glory of God.

Sixtly, in tyme of conſolation, ſhe doth not purpoſe to doe difficult matters, and of great perfection, neyther doth ſhe ſuffer herſelfe to be tranſported by the exceſſiue guſt, and ſweetnes that ſhe feeleth therein; but all that ſhe purpoſeth to doe, is done with repoſe, & maturity, alwayes conditionally, according to the will of God, to the end, that afterwardes in the tyme of deſolation, ſhe remayne firme, ſtable, and conſtant in the ſame good purpoſes.

Seauenthly, in great Solemnities, and like occaſions ſhe doth not conſider, nor rely vpon her owne

owne industry, neither doth she make too long preparations: but vsing therein conuenient diligence, dependeth wholy, and with great simplicity on God, suffering herselfe to be gouerned by him, as he best pleaseth.

THE FOVRTH EXERCISE

Of Conformity.

The Prayer preparatory in the manner accustomed.

FIRST we must consider in these wordes (*Cibus meus est, vt faciã voluntatem Patris mei qui in cælis est*, that is to say, my meat is to doe the will of my father which is in heauen:) & in other like speaches, the great conformity that our Sauiour Iesus had

had with the will of his eternall father, ſo that in all his workes he proteſted, that he pretended no other thing, but entirely to put the ſame in execution. And of this we may gather how much more we are obliged to do the ſame in his imitation, inforcing our ſelues as much as ſhalbe poſſible, and with the greateſt affection, to bend & ſubmit our wil to be conformable vnto Gods, and to conceaue an earneſt and vehement deſire therof, which ought to moue vs humbly to beſeech his diuine maieſty, that by the vertue of the merits of his deare Sonne, our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and by the ſame conformity aforeſaid that was in him, he would vouchſafe to impart vs aboundantly his grace.

The first point.

VVE must consider, that this Conformity is no other thing then a totall and resolute dependance, & subiection of our will, to the diuine, in al our works, occurrẽces, chances, whatsoeuer they be: and moreouer that all things whatsoeuer they be, are neither good nor holy, but in as much as they are beautified & sanctified with the will of God; and although they be indifferent, yea & seeme somtimes impertinent & not to the purpose, in so much notwithstanding as they proceed and depend of the will of God, they are very good, and tend to a very good end, and to the glory of God; and therfore we ought to weigh wel, & attentiuely to consider, how high & perfect a thing

it is

it is to be thus cõformed to whatsoeuer we find to be Gods will, in all things & at all tymes; and how much the endeauouring, & practising of it importeth, and how necessary it is, if we desire to attayne to great perfection.

The second point.

CONSIDER, that this is a most high perfection of God himselfe, and which we see to shine in the diuine attributes; which in their workes, and in themselues are infinitly conformable to the will of God: & from hence springeth this vnspeakable harmony in them, as is seene meruailously also in the diuine diuine persons, in all exteriour and interiour actions, aswell in that concerning created things, as in all increated acts of knowledge, loue, enioying, ioy and infinit others. This conformity

mity is ſeene alſo amongſt the bleſſed ſpirits & ſoules in heauen, who at the leaſt ſigne they perceaue of the will of God, are alwayes prepared to obey, and do obey it with great promptnes: it is alſo ſeene in all created thinges, and euen in inſenſible creatures, as is read in the Goſpel, *quia mare & venti obediunt ei*, for that the ſea, and the windes obey him; but aboue al things it is moſt apparent in the ſacred Humanity of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt with the ſecõd Perſon of the Trinity (to whom it it vnited) and with his eternall Father, and in the inferiour part with the ſuperiour in all his powers, affections, and operations: & likewiſe it is ſeene truly and perfectly in the naturall repugnance that he felt, in cõſideration of the torments, pains, and exceſſiue dolours that he was to ſuffer: and how

how much the more he did really & ſharply feele them, ſo much the more he conformed himſelfe with an vnſpeakable repoſe to the will of his Father, in deſiring them; ſo much the more increaſed in him the repugnance, and ſenſibility of the griefes, in ſuch ſort, that the contentment in this conformity, did not bring him any aſſwagement of his ſorrowes, but only made that his will ſweetly repoſed in them, and with ſo prompt and ready mind, he willed and deſired thē, that if the Iewes had not crucified him, he himſelfe (if ſuch had bene the will of his Father) was prepared to haue done it. We ſee alſo the like conformity in his moſt holy mother; which, next vnto this of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, was aboue all things created moſt ſingular & moſt perfect. And we muſt conſider that all the fore-

foresaid conformities are represented in the diuine Essence, which conteyneth in it selfe all things, & shineth infinitly in them, and in a manner that cánot be explicated, from which proceedeth great honour and glory vnto God.

THE EFFECTS OF *this Conformity in a soule endued therwith, are these that follow.*

FIRST it causeth that the said soule studieth, & laboureth with great affection, and diligence to vnderstand and know in all thinges what is the will of God, & to put it promptly and readily in execution, and not to care for any other thing.

2. She findeth in all thinges repose, & tranquillity for the assurance she hath, that in all thinges the will of God is accomplished.

3. She

3. She enioyeth great liberty of ſpirit, free from all ſcruples, vnquietnes, and inward bitternes, ſaying often vnto our Lord, Thou knoweſt Lord, that I deſire no other thing but the accompliſhing of thy holy will, make me to know it, I beſeech thee.

4. She accepteth, and receaueth afflictions, & tribulations as preſents ſent immediatly from the hand of God, attributing them to no other cauſe.

5. She is not troubled for thē, neither doth ſhe lament, nor cōplaine vnto God, but to the imitatiō of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, ſaith, *Non mea, ſed tua voluntas fiat*; not myne but thy will be done.

6. She taketh pleaſure, & reioiceth in them: and the greater they are, and more contrary vnto her, ſhe maketh her commodity the more by thē, by a greater knowledg

ledg of God, and a perfect ſubmiſſion vnto his diuine will.

7. When ſhe is calumniated, & perſecuted without any fault of her owne part, or any occaſion giuen, ſhe doth not ſeeke to iuſtify and excuſe herſelfe, but leaueth all entierly in the hands of God, for to ordayne the whole as he ſhall pleaſe.

8. Yf by wearynes, and labour ſhe feele ſome vnquietnes, yet ſhe finds repoſe, conſidering that this is the will of God, conforming herſelfe vnto the ſame, without ſeeking in this any particuler intereſt, or good vnto herſelfe.

THE

THE FIFTH EXERCISE of Vniformity.

The Prayer preparatory is to be made as accustomed.

FIRST, to consider in these words, *Pater mi, non mea sed tua voluntas fiat:* Father, not my will, but thy will be done, the great vnion that the Son of God had with the will of God his Father in a matter so difficult, contrary, and grieuous to nature, and so vnbeseeming (as may be thought) his greatnes, as his passion was; and of this we must gather, by how much greater reason we are obliged to doe the like, in the

the imitation of so rare an example of our Lord Iesus Christ.

Secondly we must with an extreme desire seeke to obtayne this grace, and instantly to pray vnto the eternall Father, that he will make vs worthy of it, by the merits of his deare Sonne.

The first point.

WE must consider that this vniformity, besides that which is contayned in the Conformity, doth more vnite the will, with that of Gods. This taketh from vs all repugnance, and difficulty, for that in all things we not only wil, what our Lord willeth, but moreouer we are incited, and mooued to will it, only for the reason that God wil haue it so, and all our contentment is to satisfy the diuine will, for the great

vnion that we haue with it: and this for the loue of it ſelfe, and not for any other reſpect. And the ſame loue inciteth vs to the ſame vnion with our euen Chriſtian: according to that which is writtē in the Acts of the Apoſtles: *Erat credentium in Domino cor vnum, & anima vna*, al the faithfull of our Lord had one hart and one ſoule in the primitiue Church. This vniformity ſhineth, and is plainely ſeene, firſt in thinges wanting life, the which by an inſtinct of nature in ſo great diuerſities of operations agree altogeather to execute mer-uailouſly whatſoeuer they are ordeyned for by God; and altogeather accompliſh vniformely this moſt beautyfull, moſt excellent and meruayłous order, and harmony of this world; as we ſee for example in a houſe well ordered, that many ſeruāts performing du-

ly

ly diuers offices that are cõmaunded them by their mayster, come finally to accompliſh, & finiſh all, as one only affayre. But this vniformity ſhineth much more perfectly in heauen amongſt the happy ſpirits, and ſoules, in whom by the efficacy of loue, the diuine will cauſeth one hart, ſpirit, and will, as if truly all togeather were but one, by a moſt ſingular vniõ with the ſupreme will: but aboue all it ſhineth moſt highly and meruayloufly in the diuine attributes, that agree, and accord in the eſſence, & diuine will, in the diuine perſons, & in the actes that they produce.

THE EFFECTES *of this Vniformity in a ſoule, are theſe that follow.*

THE Firſt is, that the ſoule that is endued with this vniformi

formity, not only contenteth herſelfe in al that which is Gods wil, but moreouer vniteth herſelf with the ſame of God, and by this being made one ſelfe thing with it, ſhe reioiceth equally in all things, only for no other cauſe, but for that the diuine wil is pleaſed therwith, & will haue it ſo.

2. In all places, and in all thinges ſhe findeth God, and vniteth herſelfe with him, & all creatures ſerue her as a ladder to rayſe her vnto God.

3. For the that ſinnes ſhe falleth into, ſhe is grieued for the offence that is againſt Almighty God: but euen of them alſo ſhe taketh occaſion to abaſe herſelfe, and that with ſo much greater ſubmiſſion, penetrating into the conſideration of the loue, with which God hath permitted them, ſhe vniteth herſelfe vnto him.

4. How

4. How much the more it seemeth to her sometimes that she is depriued of all grace, abādoned of God, and left as ouerwhelmed in her miseries; so much the more, by the meanes of them, she vniteth herselfe with God, knowing well, that the graces that she first felt in aboundance, are retyred into God, and that they are kept, and preserued more securely in him, then when she felt them in her selfe; & is contented, and more reioyceth to see them in God, then in herselfe: and therefore rayfing and vniting herselfe with God, goeth to find them in him, as in their proper origen, and conuenient place.

5. Being afflicted with any temptation eyther of the diuell, or other creature whatsoeuer, she reiecteth, and resisteth all the euill that might happen vnto her by it, and withall acknowledging such

creatures to be miniſters of God, who permitteth them for his greater glory, euen by the meanes of theſe temptations ſhe commeth to vnite herſelfe with God.

6. How much the more ſhe feeleth herſelf fauoured of God by imparting his celeſtiall graces, and how much the more excellent, & of greater conſequence they are, ſhe comming afterwardes to leaue them for to vnite herſelfe more fully & perfectly vnto God, from whome theſe foreſayd graces proceed: ſo much the more ſhe ſheweth, that ſhe made much leſſe eſteeme of the giftes then of the giuer.

7. In all her interiour and exteriour operations in a moment & twinkling of an eye, ſhe vniteth herſelf with God, to know in them his will, & to put it preſently in execution: and by this all her actions

actions are done without any disordinate affection, propriety, or particuler respect.

THE SIXT EXERCISE

Of Deiformity.

The preparatory Prayer accustomed, before the Exercise.

IN the beginning, & in consideration of these wordes of our Lord, *Ego dixi Dij estis:* I haue sayd, you are Gods &c. and in this that he sayd vnto his Father, *vt vnum sint, sicut tu Pater in me, & ego in te, vt & ipsi in nobis vnum sint*, that all may be one, as thou my Father art in me, and I in thee, so also that they may be one in vs. Heere we must endea-

uour to penetrate into the excellency, & greatnes of the perfection we are called vnto by our Lord Ieſus, to wit, to vnite our ſelues in ſuch ſort by efficacy of wil, and by the vehemency of a louing affection, to the diuine wil, that being transformed into the ſame, we be no more, as we may ſay, our ſelues, nor that which we were before, but like vnto God, & in God himſelfe, Deified to the imitation of the vnion of the Sonne of God, with his eternall Father.

2. Being proſtrate, with a moſt profound ſubmiſſion in the depth of our nothing, in the preſence of the height of his greatnes, as altogeather aſtoniſhed, and relying on the loue which incited him ſo much to abaſe himſelfe, euen vnto vs, thereby to rayſe vs vp to himſelfe, we muſt craue of this loue a correſpondence of affection,

ction, which may liue in vs with a vehement desire of this true and perfect Deiformity in him.

The first point.

VVE must consider, that this Deiformity consisteth to haue our will vnited by such efficacy of loue, with the diuine, that she feele no more from henceforward herselfe, as if verily she were not at all, but that only she feele in her the diuine will, & that all her actiõs, desires, & works tend to the only accomplishing of the same. In such sort, that euen in vertues, and holy thinges, she willeth them no more, with a created will, nor by it, but only by the increated, made hers by an entiere transformation into it; considering that our Lord Iesus intended to shew this in these words, *non mea, sed tua voluntas fiat.*

The ſecond point.

THAT this Deiformity is a dependance, and participation of the Deiformity in the diuine perſons, not only in their vnion in the diuine eſſence, but alſo in the vnion, or rather vnity of will, which is but betweene them, by the vertue of mutuall, and conſubſtantiall loue, which is ſo great, that it interlaceth the deuine perſons in the moſt pure eſſence of the center of the diuinity, in ſuch ſort, that although the perſons be really diſtinct, they nevertheles tranſforme themſelues by the force of this loue ſo inwardly the one into the other, that one ſeemeth truly to be the other, and principally in the center of the diuinity: and the like is found in the diuine proprieties & attributes, which although they

they are perfectly vnited in the diuine simplicity, they haue notwithstanding euery one his owne proper forme or cõdition (the Deuines cal it *rationem formalem*, a formall reason:) but by an ouerflowing, or rather a kind of swallowing & efficacy of loue, they come to be so interlaced, & vnited in the Center of the Diuinity, that it seemeth they are all but one attribute in this Center of purity.

The third point.

THAT by a dependance, and by the reason of such a Deiformity she draweth by the same efficacy of loue, all created things to this soueraigne loue, as to their Center, and origen from whence they are produced, & from thence to the foresayd most pure being, where they are ineffably deified.

The fourth point.

THAT the humanity of our Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt, and of his moſt holy mother, & of all the bleſſed, by the working of God in them, and by the knowledge, and enioying that they haue of the diuinity, are as it were ſwallowed vp, and rayſed into this foreſayd being, and vnity, and in the ſame moſt perfectly deified: and finally that all the Saints, and the iuſt yet vpon the earth, are trãſformed into God, & from thence afterwards returne to their being, as a drop of water being caſt into a great veſſel full of wyne, is changed into the ſame, & after being out of the ſayd veſſell, returneth to his firſt being.

THE

The fifth point.

VVE must consider, that after the soule is ariued vnto such an estate, that she hath taken away, by the vertue of this Deifying loue, and of the other aforesayd lights, all that might hinder the working of God in her, then hath she attayned vnto this Deiformity; and this Deiformity produceth these effects that follow.

1. She is Deiformed in all her actions, doing them, as if God did them, and not herselfe; & thus in them, & by them entreth wholy vnto God, and acknowledgeth him, & enioyeth him.

2. Euen as a sinner doth no action but out of God, being depriued of his grace, euen so on the cõtrary, such a soule doth not find,

or

or doe any thing in which God is not, and by meanes whereof, ſhe doth not enter, and vnite herſelfe vnto God.

3. She eſteemeth not of any thing, but in as much as it cõmeth from God, or that it be done for God, & in God.

4. Although that ſomtymes our Lord hide, and withdraw himſelfe from ſuch a ſoule, yet in this ſubtraction, & hiding, ſhe retireth wholy into God, hiding herſelfe in him, without any ſweetnes or feeling: yea how much the more, that by meanes of this rigour, leauing, ſharpnes, and bitternes, it ſeemeth that ſhe is far from God: ſo much the more ſhe returneth, is Deiformed, and repoſeth in him.

5. Being moſt certaine and aſſured, that ſhe herſelfe, as of herſelfe, cannot performe any thing that is good, by reaſon of her totall

tall vnability, knowing truly that she is nothing, hath nothing, and can doe nothing of herselfe; she is not confounded, nor any whit troubled, yea euen in the middest of confusions, she findeth herselfe much assured, & cõtented, knowing certainly that she seeketh not any thing proper, & that nothing of hers is therin, but God doth all imediatly.

6. Although she should raise the dead, and do such meruailous workes, & great things, yet she would neither care, nor esteeme of such workes, or be moued with them; but in as much as God would, she should: & although she should possesse al the treasures of heauen & earth, she would not esteeme of them in themselues, nor for herselfe, but refer, and offer vp all thinges vnto their first origen, from whẽce they proceeded.

7. Al-

7. Although ſhe knew ſenſibly that ſhe had God in her, yea and though it were in the ſame manner as our bleſſed Lady his holy Mother had, ſhe would not be moued any more, then if ſhe did not perceaue any ſuch thing at all or that ſhe had him not in herſelfe, but in God, only imitating heerin the glorious virgin Mary, who hauing in her armes our bleſſed Lord, held him, as if ſhe had not had him, but as if her armes had ben Gods, & as though he held himſelfe, & this was the moſt excellent Deiformity of this moſt pure ſoule.

8. When the ſoule that is come to this Deiformity, ſeeth herſelfe to be prayſed, ſhe taketh no maner of pleaſure therin, neither is ſhe troubled, afflicted, altered, or moued any whit at all, for ſo much as ſhe is wholy in God, and receyuing

uing the praises that belongeth to God, referreth and offereth them all vnto him.

9. Two soules Deiformed, hauing betweene them great conformity of affection, intertayning one another with mutuall loue of very great efficacy, & with great disappropriation; and therfore being to be separated one frō the other neuer so farr, for the greater glory of God, do care nothing at all, nor are they any thing disquieted, for whatsoeuer accident, how great or grieuous, that may befall them.

10. If God would publish to the world the Deiformity that he hath giuen her, she would not be disquieted or troubled, but would say, Lord thou hast done it, doe whatsoeuer it pleaseth thee, for the whole work is thine.

OF

OF SELFE-LOVE.

THERE are three ſortes of ſelfeloue; the firſt is in a worldly perſon, who liues amidſt the honours, greatnes, and dignities of this world.

The ſecond is in a ſpirituall, perſon, who deſireth to ſerue God, & this maketh him to ſeeke ſwetnes, conſolation and light, hauing a deſire to ſerue God.

The third is in perſons that haue made ſome progreſſe and are aduaunced in the ſeruice of our Lord, which is ſuch that with the ſame, they mingle a deſire to profit greatly, and to ſtriue for perfection.

Therfore great watchfulnes & heed is neceſſary, to be able to know it: & for this end, it is needfull to examine very exactly thy inte-

interiour, and to weigh well, whether ſuch a deſire be with paine and anxiety, or not: and when it is found to be with affliction and trouble, the perſon may be aſſured it is ſelfe-loue, and it is the more ſubtile, in that there increaſeth with this payne, a greater deſire of perfectiō. Now he that will profit indeed, muſt be wary to tak away the hindrance, which is ſelfe loue, & to hope alwaies in God, & to haue a firme confidence, that vnto whō almighty God giueth ſuch a deſire, he will alſo giue ſtrength & meanes to bring thē to perfection, when it ſhallbe expedient for his honour and glory.

And we muſt not think that for any diligence the ſoule can performe, ſhe can ariue therunto, but rather with a ſincere ſubmiſſion vnto God, and with an ope-

ration

ration as it were inſenſible, ſhe ſhall come to haue the accompliſhing of her deſire. And ſo in this eſtate, ſhe muſt be as a little infant that ſucketh, whoſe operations are of that quality, that they giue ioy and conſolation to the creature, and this for the innocency & purity which is in them, which maketh ſuch creatures not only agreable to the Creator, but alſo to thoſe that behould them; euen ſo a ſoule that would be depriued of proper loue, ought in this manner to imitate ſuch actes, that is to ſay, that euen as a litle infant deſireth neither this, nor that, but only that which maintaineth his life to wit, milke, & this without any ſelfe reſpect: euen ſo a ſoule ought to do the like, that is to ſay, to deſire only that which giueth her life, which is God himſelfe: and with how much the greater ſincerity,

cerity, fidelity, & constancy she seeketh God, in the interiour of her soule; so much the more she maketh herselfe agreeable, & pleasing to his diuine Maiesty.

THE CONDITIONS *that a soule ought to haue to performe that which hath bene specified, are these that follow.*

1. THE first, is to desire to be euen as perfect as God would haue her, and when, & in the manner he pleaseth.

2. To take away all hinderances that may any way impeach the executiō of such a desire in her and endeauour that there should not be any thing betweene God and her, no not God himselfe, in regard of the pleasure, and contentment that is accustomed to spring

ſpring of the knowledg and feeling that ſhe hath of God himſelfe: for although that the ſayd pleaſure, and contentment be not euill, nor any ſinne, yet notwithſtanding it hindereth, ſo that the diſappropriatiõ doth not ariue to his perfection. Therfore if ſomtimes the ſoule take contentment or pleaſure in her ſelfe, & remaine buſied in creatures, vnder the ſhadow and pretence of the Creator; ſhe putteth God himſelfe as a hinderãce, between him & her ſoule, & diſuniteth him from the ſame, for the reſpect ſhe hath of that which proceedeth from his diuinity, or is appertaining vnto him.

3. Not to take care, or be to much grieued if ſhe attain not to that height of perfection, vnto which ſhe findeth herſelfe called; for God is infinitely pleaſed to ſee a ſoule in paine for his diuine loue,

the

the Kingly prophet Dauid hauing ſaid ſo much in his Pſalme 90. *Cum ipſo ſum in tribulatione*: that is to ſay, I am with him in tribulation. For the interiour tribulations make a ſoule more capable then the exterior, to receaue particuler graces from God; yea ſometymes ſo great, as cannot be thought or imagined: Therefore a ſoule ought to tak great heed, that ſhe doe not grieue or tormẽt herſelfe, if ſhe attayne not to the top of the perfection ſo much deſired; for that ſometymes God giueth great perfection, and yet with the ſame a ſoule ſhall not be ſo agreable to his diuine maieſty, as another that hath it not, but doe on their part al that poſſibly they can to haue it. For hauing the ſaid perfection ſhe will haue a ſatisfaction, and contentment in herſelfe, the which although it be good, it

will

will not be ſo pleaſing to our Lord, as the payne and affliction that a ſoule ſuffereth for his loue: but with this payne and trouble ſhe ought to be wholy conformed to his diuine will, without diſquiet, and not to ſeparate herſelfe any thing at all from the loue of God, for otherwiſe it wilbe ſelfe-loue.

THE EFFECTS of Selfe-loue.

THIS Selfe-loue, although it be called in this manner, ought rather neuertheles to be called want of loue to our ſelues, hatred, death, a ſelfe-venome, or poiſon: for that it hath no regard, nor reſpect, eyther to life or health, to body or ſoule, nor to any other thing: it eſteemeth of nothing but what it affecteth, it regardeth not God himſelfe. This ſelfe-loue was

firſt in Lucifer whē he made greater eſteeme of his owne excellency, then to be with God in Paradiſe, wherby he incurred preſently death vnto himſelfe, to wit, to be ſeparated from God: the like alſo happeneth to a ſoule, for it ſeparateth her from God, maketh her become inſenſible, taking from her the light of reaſon, to be opiniatiue, churliſh, and voyd of ciuility. Selfe-loue is like vnto the hearb called Dogs-tooth, which being not rooted out, commeth by little & little to haue ſuch force, that it marreth all other hearbes, that are neere vnto it: euen ſo, if this Selfeloue be not taken away and rooted out of our hart, it wil take ſuch increaſe in our ſoule, that it will ſpoile and corrupt all vertues and graces that are in the ſame; for not only it corrupteth the vertues that we haue gotten by our induſtry;

but alſo thoſe that we haue receyued in Baptiſme, and in the other Sacraments. It doth alſo the ſame in our ſoules, as the opilations or obſtructions doe in our bodyes, which are the cauſes of infinite diſeaſes. It maketh a man proud and high minded, and afterwardes caſteth him into the depth of deſpaire. It giueth him a preſumptuous ſtrength, and hope to do what he will, and afterwards makes him vnable, and cold in the ſeruice of God. It cloatheth the ſoule, & coloureth it with diuers colours vnder the pretence of ſanctity, afterwards deſpoyleth it and maketh it naked of the meanes that might bring her to her Creatour. It is a venome by which the ſoule becõmeth ſenſeleſſe, and is ruyned and deſtroyed. It is like vnto the moſt hurtfull venome of the Aſpe: it gnaweth and conſumeth without being

being perceaued, and inchaunteth and betwitcheth in such sort, that she knoweth not what she doth, nor what she would; but passing from one thing to another, she tormenteth herselfe, and not being able to come to what she desireth, she grieueth, fretteth, and pyneth away; & if any counsell her for her help, comfort, and profit, she remaineth as a senseles body, not apprehending any thing, like to one that had no life: finally the ornaments that the foresayd selfe-loue giueth vnto a soule, are these that follow.

First it maketh it vnlike vnto God and like to Lucifer: it causeth it to be hurtfull vnto other & displeasing to herselfe. It maketh it a vessell of contumely, or sea of iniquity. A soule infected therewith may be likned to a ship that is exposed to the waues, and tempests

of the ſea, that is ſhaken with all ſortes of windes; like vnto a ſtinking water, a barraine ground that produceth no kind of fruit that is pleaſant, an infected carren, and in a word it is like an vnbridled & vntamed horſe; but which is moſt of all, ſuch a ſoule deceyueth thoſe that ſhe conuerſeth withall, for ſhe ſheweth herſelfe as though ſhe were full of vertue & holynes, & hideth inwardly the qualities of a venemous ſerpent.

A DESCRIPTION *of Selfe-loue.*

SELFE-loue may be figured, & repreſented, as a man without eyes, and notwithſtanding hath foure, but none for God, but for himſelfe: with two he ſeeth, and with other two forſeeth only that which is for his commodity.

He

He hath no eares to vnderstand the voyce of God that soundeth mediatly, or immediatly, to wit, he is not attentiue, when he is excited inwardly to know his defaultes, and imperfections, but he hath six earers to appropriate any thing to himselfe: with two he heareth his own praises, with two others he harkeneth vnto that which may augmēt this selfe loue, & with the other two he is watchfull and attentiue, that nothing be sayd agaynst him. He hath three harts, notwithstanding he hath not one that may bring him any profit for the good of his soule, or whereby to come to perfection, for he hath not any affection, tast, or feeling of good. The first hart is for that which concerneth his exteriour, or interiour commodity in regard of his body.

The second is for such things as

he doth negotiate with others, to the end the world may haue him in good reputation.

The third maketh him to ſhew a mild, and gracious countenance to be beloued of all, hauing his lookes very humble, his wordes fayre, and well placed; outwardly an Angell, but inwardly a rauening wolfe; in ſumme, ſeeking no other thing then to pleaſe himſelf.

HOW SELFE-LOVE entreth, and intrudeth it ſelfe into all things.

THIS Selfe-loue is moſt ſubtile, and hideth it ſelfe, entring and intruding into all things, euen into the Sacraments. Firſt cauſing perſons to frequent them for the proper guſt they find therein.

Secondly to be well eſteemed off

off by others, & also to couer some defectes: it thrusteth it selfe, & entreth in the same manner, in hearing the word of God for the pleasure they take therein. It entreth into holy Orders, when the are receaued or vsed for vanity, for some commodity, ambition, or other euill designement. It thrusteth it selfe into marriages, when they mary for to satisfy their concupiscence, and appetites. It intrudeth it selfe also into the practise of vertues, procuring that great paine & trauell be imployed in it, without hauing any good, right, or sincere intention for the glory of God, but rather for some other respect. It thrusteth it selfe, and entreth into the exercise of Prayer, pretending to receaue therein tast, light, and feeling, vnder pretence to be vnited vnto God; and in doing this, the perso so infected, seeketh himselfe,

ſelfe. A ſigne of this is, that when the conſolations are taken away and loſt, he doth not perſeuere in prayer. It hideth it ſelfe vnder humility, and ſeemeth vile, & abiect: but when others ſay ſo much, he is troubled: and vndoubtedly this is a true ſigne of ſelfe-loue. It will haue alſo part in obedience, for ſuch a one pretendeth very willingly to accept whatſoeuer is cõmaunded him; but ſoone after he putteth ſo many excuſes and reaſons, that he hindreth the effect of the ſame, and diſchargeth himſelfe of what is commaunded. It putteth it ſelfe into the deſire of bearing the croſſe with our Sauiour Chriſt, firſt inciting a deſire with a great greedines of the ſharpeſt, & moſt bitter things that may be, as we ſee women great with child couet to eat ſtrange thinges, as coales, earth, and the like impertinent

nent stuffe, and yet this desire of the crosse shalbe for other ends, & motiues, then for the loue of God. Secondly it entreth into the desire to satisfy for sinnes, and to increase in merit, when the soule remayneth & persuereth in the crosse, saying, That she will satisfy the more for her offences, and by it she shall remayne lesse time in Purgatory, or els that there will so much the lesse rest to be purged, and merit wilbe increased thereby: without all doubt these pretences proceed of selfe-loue.

Thirdly, it thrusteth it selfe to the bearing of a crosse, and suffering of afflictions for vaine glory; as well knowing that commonly such persons as are much troubled, and afflicted, are very much admired of the world, and are held for Saints, in hauing such trialls, and are thought to be greatly pleasing

vnto God. It entreth alſo by a certayne ſuperfluous, ouer great, and exceſſiue deſire of the croſſe, but it is for the pleaſure that one taketh oftentymes in the ſame croſſe, in which ſelf-loue much delighteth.

PROPERTIES *of a ſoule infected with ſelfe-loue.*

SELFE-loue robbeth from God, what appertayneth vnto him, for it ſtealeth and taketh from him his honour, by ſeeking to attribute the ſame vnto himſelfe, as the Phariſy robbed our Lord of his honor, when he ſayd, *non ſum ſicut cæteri hominum*, I am not like vnto other men.

Firſt this loue maketh the ſoule vnlike vnto God, being a moſt ſimple obiect, an infinite purity; Self-loue maketh the ſoule double, crafty,

crafty, and dissembling, and causeth it to seeme other then it is.

Secondly, it maketh her like vnto the diuell, for euen as the diuell is neuer cõtent, nor reposeth; so the like miseries doth selfe-loue cause in the soule, for it causeth much vnquietnes, and many troubles in her, not being able to find any repose or contentment. It maketh her a lyar, and an enemy to truth, and by this meanes she becommeth hatefull vnto others; for that such qualities are insupportable: moreouer it causeth continually fretting and vnquiet, for neuer finding any repose, and not daring to desire death by reason of this selfe loue, she tormenteth and afflicteth herselfe without ceasing. It bringeth her also to be a vessell of contumely, for that to satisfy herself she doth euen her best actions, desiring prayers, the Sacra-

ments, and ſuch like thinges, hauing for a foundation of all this her ſelfe-loue. And thus the works become defiled, foule and infected with this ſelfe-loue, and the ſoule by this meanes is a ſea of iniquity: for the bottome of her imperfections not being able to be found, ſhe is a ſea without bottome, that is mooued and troubled with contrary winds, & ſwolne with meruaylous great, fearefull, and horrible waues, being angry, and euer oppoſing herſelf againſt thoſe that would affoard her any help or remedy. She is alſo like vnto a ſhip, expoſed to the tempeſts & raging of the ſea, for this ſoule ſayling in the ſea of ſelfe-loue, euen as a ſhip in the ſea, ſo is ſhe combated on euery ſide, making ſhipwracke for a ſmal matter. She may alſo be compared to a ſtinking water, for ſhe runneth on euery ſide (as water that

that hath no ſtay) to ſeeke if ſhe cā find contentment; but by reaſon of her imperfections ſhe is very noyſome, and yeldeth an euill ſauour vnto thoſe that are pure, and cleane. She reſembleth alſo a barrayne ground, that produceth nothing but thornes, thiſtles, and other ſuch vnſauoury weeds, ſpoyling all the fruit of good workes. She is like vnto a ſtinking carren, for this ſelf-loue infecteth the ſoule and maketh her ſerue him as food to a rauen, and afterwardes to become a prey and repaſt to that infernal fiend whom ſhe reſembleth. Briefly this loue thus qualifyed, is as an vntamed horſe without bit, or bridle; it will not be ruled by any perſon, nor cōtaine it ſelfe, neither by counſell, nor by skilfull aduiſe, but it maketh the ſoule remayne as rooted in her proper ſenſe, and ſelfe iudgement, whereby ſhe

ſhe becommeth incorrigible: and this happeneth ſometimes to ſome ſpirituall perſon, vnder colour of ſanctity, which is very hardly cured.

This foreſayd Selfe-loue ſpringeth of the delight that the creature hopeth to enioy in thoſe thinges ſhe ſeeketh, and which do appertayne vnto her, and it groweth to that paſſe, that ſhe eſteemeth not of her life, nor of any other thing els, in reſpect of attayning to what ſhe ſo liketh. It proceedeth alſo of the nature wounded & corrupted in her iraſcible and concupiſcible powers, and euill habits, and cuſtomes which haue gotten root in the ſoule. And this is vnderſtood, not only of the firſt kind of ſelf-loue which is cõmon & familiar to worldly perſons, but alſo of the ſecond, wherwith oftentimes ſpirituall perſons are intan-

tangled, the which may be called ſelf-loue, for the taſt, & pleaſure that they ſeeke in ſpirituall thinges. It is vnderſtood alſo of the third kind of ſelf-loue in ſpirituall perſons, who are already aduaunced, and profited in the way of vertue, which may be compared to the poyſon of the diamond, that gnaweth a creature, interiourly by litle, & litle, but it leaueth no exteriour ſigne, as other poyſons do: ſo this proper loue gnaweth oftentymes inwardly the conſcice, but it leaueth no mark or ſigne in the ſoule, but killeth it, and bringeth it in the end to death, & damnation. It is a very euident ſigne of the forſaid ſelf-loue when our Lord hath giuen any particuler grace to a ſoule, and when it pleaſeth him to depriue her of it, ſhe falleth into great griefe and ſadnes.

The root of this forſaid Selfe-loue lieth hid vnder the colour of faygned holines, and guideth the ſoule by a very ſtrait, and narrow way, and maketh it appeare, to thoſe that conuerſe which ſuch a perſon, that the way to ſerue God is very ſtrait, and more difficult, then in truth it is. It engendreth a great wearines of ſanctity, aſwell in the parties that haue it, as in the perſons that conuerſe with them; which is no true holines. It exciteth a great meruaile, and an aſtoniſhment with vnquietnes, which procureth to the parties a diſguſt and confuſion, in ſeing that they cannot arriue to that perfection and holines, which they ſee in others, wherby they remaine without repoſe, which is a great ſigne that this holines proceedeth of ſelfe loue. And he that wrote this diſcourſe witneſſeth to haue proued

ued & found this many tymes in hmiſelfe, to wit, that in thinking on the ſanctity of ſome ſuch perſō, he much meruailed, but notwithſtanding he did not fall into vnquietnes and confuſion.

REMEDIES *againſt Selfe-loue.*

1. FIRST the ſoule infected herewith muſt ſeeke to haue a perſon very much enlightned by God, that hath the diſcretion of ſpirits, with whom ſhe muſt confer of her troubles & deſires, and according to his iudgmēt eſteeme herſelfe to be ſick, and to haue need of help, as in truth ſhe hath, and is not able to help her ſelfe.

2. Secondly ſhe muſt ſeeke to mortify all her deſires & affectiōs, aſwell, of thoſe thinges that are good,

good & holy, as of thoſe that are indifferent, and not to run after them, eſpecially, when ſhe is moſt prouoked vnto them, and for this effect it will ſerue her much to lay open her hart to her ſpirituall father, and ſuffer herſelfe to be guided, and conducted by him.

3. Thirdly the remedy is to thinke that all thinges, how good and holy ſoeuer they be, are not alwayes pleaſing to God, but only thoſe that come from him, and are required by him. And by this we may know, that they come from him when the ſaid things do not moue vs, nor lift vs vp vnto pride in hauing them, nor tormẽt & afflict vs in hauing them not, but bring with them a peace and tranquillity to the ſoule: in ſuch ſort, that ſhe remayneth in as great repoſe in the execution of them, as if ſhe did not execute them at all.

4. The

4. The fourth remedy is to cõsider, that to accompliſh ſuch deſires of this ſelf-loue, is to contemne God, and to contradict, and be oppoſite to the diuine will, for ſo much as Diuine loue, is altogeather contrary to Selfe loue; and all our actions that we are induced vnto by it, are contrary to the bleſſed will of God, and by that meanes we become oppoſite, and contrary vnto him.

5. The fifth remedy belongeth to the ſpirituall father, who to take away, and cleere the ſoule from all ſelfe-loue, in all that ſhe pretendeth in her actions, and deſires, muſt firſt ſeeke all the meanes to penetrate into her hart, that is, to gaine her good opinion and eſtimation, and to be gratefull vnto her; & afterwards he muſt begin with great ſweetnes to apply his remedies, and ſo to cure and heale her:

her: which muſt not be done in ſuch open manner that ſhe may perceaue it, but with ſome kind of diſſimulation, and as it were in ieſt, making her to doe all thinges contrary to that ſhe herſelfe diſpoſeth off, or deſireth to doe: As for example, if the ſaid perſon be deſirous to goe vnto one place of recreation, to make her goe to another: ſomtymes alſo not taking them away altogeather, but correcting them, as if ſhe would mortify herſelfe with long diſciplines, to make her to vſe ſhort, for ſeldome it doth profit to withſtand proper Loue altogeather at one blow, as to forbid her wholy diſciplines, except it be to a perſon already aduaunced in the way of perfection, & in the exerciſe therof. And as this his dexterity ought to proceed of charity, & loue: ſo alſo ought ſhe to be ruled with the

ſame

ſame loue, for ſo much as in ſuch cures and ſicknes, ſeuerity profiteth nothing, by reaſon that this ſelfe-loue is ſweet & gracious, and maketh the ſoule very tender and delicate: ſo that if ſhe be vſed with ſharpnes & roughnes, ſhe entreth preſently into diſdaine, flieth and abhorreth the cure. And by this may be ſeene, that Selfe-loue is healed with loue, and by loue.

This ſweetnes is moſt neceſſary in ſuperiours, & principally when they treat with thoſe vnder their charge, of thinges appertayning to the ſuperiour part, and ſpirit: for ordinarily in this affaire all the euill proceedeth of this roote, and ſeuerity procureth anger, and diſdaine, and hindreth much: & moreouer the Phiſitian of Selfe-loue muſt note, that he ought to be cõtinually diligent, & not to abandon the cure, but to doe as a Phiſitian

ſitian doth, who hath one grieuouſly ſicke in his charge, for he viſiteth often his patient, and many tymes feeleth his pulſe, and neuer abandoneth nor leaueth him, vntill he perceaue that he is in better eſtate, and that he beginneth to amend.

He muſt alſo note, that there be two ſortes of perſons that are ſick of this ſelfe-loue: ſome of thē are as it were in a conſuming feauer, the euill wherof hath already very much penetrated into the inward part; and although oftentimes they are incurable, or at the leaſt very hard to be cured, yet notwithſtanding, he muſt not alwaies deſpaire of them, but muſt performe in their behalfe what the ſaid corporall Phiſitian doth to thoſe that hath the forſaid diſeaſe, to wit, to performe on his part, whatſoeuer he can, and to leaue the

the reſt vnto God; but he muſt take great heed, that he doe not beare himſelfe to harſh & to auſtere, for that would be very domageable, and pernicious.

The others that are ſicke, are ſuch, and of ſuch an humor, as they may be healed: and although it be needfull to vſe great ſwetnes, & dexterity in their behalfe, as hath bene ſaid before, and that there is great difficulty in the cure, yet notwithſtáding he muſt not deſpaire, by reaſon of the difficulty that he perceaueth in the beginning; for the cauſe of this difficulty is, that this proper loue, doth ſo much blind the ſoule, that it doth not permit her to ſee clearly her faults, and imperfections: and therfore ſhe not acknowledging herſelfe to be ſicke, the euill can hardly be cured, ſo that one ought to imploy all his care, and induſtry to make her

her to enter into this knowledg, which in the end wil ſerue very much for her remedy and cure.

Firſt the ſaid ſpirituall father muſt take great heed that he ſpeak not any thing of ſelf-loue, & that muſt be ſhunned from the beginning, leaſt the infirme ſhould be too much diſmayed, and fall into too much feare: but he muſt a far off put before her, and cauſe her to practiſe the exerciſe of diſappropriatiõ, depriuing her firſt of ſome things not very difficult vnto her, afterwardes make her returne to herſelfe, and cauſe her to know how ſhe was hindred in this loue, although in chiding her, he ought to ſay nothing that may cõtriſtate her, or to ſeeme to blame her, but rather by little and little make her know her euill; notwithſtanding when ſhe knoweth it, or when ſhe is cured, then he muſt mak her vnder-

derstand, how great, and dange-rous it was, for he must comport himselfe in this behalfe, as a guid doth in a iourney, who being to passe some dangerous strait, sayth nothing to the passengers of the perill and daunger, but only en-courageth them to follow him, & afterwards hauing passed the strait, hath no more care, nor looketh backe vnto it; euen so, those that treate with such kind of persons, ought to be haue themselues dex-terously without making them to thinke of the difficulty that they shall haue to mortify the said selfe-loue, sometymes speaking to them in parables & similitudes in a third person, sometymes by good coun-sell, making them to vnderstand & to come to the knowledge of their defects; then with sweetnes, and taking euer some good occasion to make them to returne, and enter

into themselues.

Whilest I was writing a copy of this booke, our Lord inspired this vertuous Dame for whome it was first composed, that she should aduertise me of this that followeth, that I might set it downe in the end of this worke: to wit, that as there is an Angell appointed ouer proper loue to repelle it, and fight against it; so there is another ouer the loue of God, to conserue, increase, and augment it, who from the beginning of their creation were deputed to this function, the one, & the other not passing further then their charge. *S. Gabriel* was deputed ouer diuine loue, by the meanes whereof he was chosen to be the messenger of the sacred mystery of the Incarnation of the God, a work of most singular loue of Almighty God towardes mankind, vnto whome it was especi-

ally

ally reuealed in heauē by the moſt Bleſſed Trinity, when the diuine perſons made their actes of reciprocall loue. *S. Michael* was alſo appointed ouer proper loue; and therfore whē Lucifer rebelled in heauen againſt God, ſeeking to be like to the moſt high, & equalling himſelfe with him, he was ordeyned by our Lord to reſiſt him, as one that had a great zeale of diuine loue, contray to this ſelfe-loue. Our Lord then reuealed this ſecret to this holy Lady, and ſayd vnto her. Aduertiſe thy ſpiritual Father, that he may learne, that when any one would heale a ſoule, infected with Selfe-loue, he demaund my aydand ſuccour, by the prayers & interceſſiō of S. *Michael* the Archāgel: and when any ſoule ſhalbe touched, & ſurprized with diuine loue, it is needfull thar ſhe implore the fauour of S. *Gabriel*, to the end,

that by this meanes she may more easily attaine vnto the soueraigne perfection of the said loue of God.

AN APPENDIX TO THIS ABRIDGMENT,

Whereby to ascend to a most high Perfection.

THis perfectiō presupposed of all the estates before declared, euen vnto this present, cōsisteth in an vtter forsaking of al pretēces whatsoeuer, & not to pretend any other thing, but God only, in a most excellent, and a most perfect manner, in all our actions, whereby we may attayne vnto a most high perfectiō, which consisteth in the examen following,

ing, distinguished into seauen points.

1. The first is, when the soule apprehendeth any trouble or affliction, that of new is presented vnto her. For that then by the suggestiõ of the inferiour, or infirme part, the apprehension of such a crosse is accustomed to be very vehement: and with this, a thousand exaggerations wilbe presented, that will cause it to appeare more violent, wherby the soule is accustomed to take this affliction with much difficulty, and many repugnances.

To remedy this, and to prouide for it throughly, it is necessary that the superior part of the soule, propose all this before her, as a Iudge doth, who before he giue his sentence, harkeneth to the reasons of both parties, prouided alwayes that she be not mooued any thing with their reasons, but that she re-

mayne without paſſiō or any kind of alteration, ſuſpending her iudgement, vntill ſhe find out what may be according to reaſon: and that ſhe may the better vnderſtand it, theſe two meanes will ayd her. The one is, that ſhe enter into herſelfe, and conſider how Almighty God knoweth, and ſeeth all her troubles, and whatſoeuer ſhe endureth, and therfore ſhe ought to remit it wholy into his hands, to diſpoſe thereof as he ſeeth moſt expedient. The ſecond is to conſider, & belieue aſſuredly, that euen as the diuine boũty deſireth nothing but our good; euen ſo his diuine prouidence (which is hid from vs, not being permitted vnto vs to ſeeke too curiouſly into it) knoweth very well how to prouide & remedy all in time, and manner, as it ſhall ſeeme beſt vnto him, and not as beſt liketh vs, nor as it may beſt

beſt pleaſe vs. Of this ſuſpenſion, and repoſe of ſpirit follow two things; the firſt, that ſhe putteth away, and reiecteth all the hinderances, and trouble, and the deceytes that might happen by this apprehenſion: and ſecondly it wil follow, that ſhe ſhall come to conceaue a true, pure, ſincere, and mature apprehenſion of all her aſſayres.

The ſecond point is, that when the ſoule is come to receaue, and accept this affliction, as comming from God.

Remedies.

She muſt not reſt herſelf heere, or permit herſelfe to accept of it, as often many ſoules are accuſtomed to doe, to wit, baſely with an infinit number of difficultyes, of excuſes, and ſeeking of themſelues, but ſhe muſt accept thereof

in a high manner, and perfectly, to wit, from the hand of God, with a perfect submission, & resignation to his diuine will, resigning herselfe wholy into his handes and possession, surmounting all difficulties, how great soeuer may be presented vnto her.

3. The third point is to know how the soule ought to behaue herselfe in the behalfe of the inferiour part, to wit; in afflictions, troubles, and motions, concerning paynes, sickenes, or other corporall accidents, that are accustomed to proceed of these afflictions, for the repugnance, and contrariety that nature findeth therein.

Remedies.

Reason, & the superiour part of the soule, ought by the influence of grace, and interiour recollection, to impart, and send forth

forth force and ſtrength of vertue, aſwell into the parts of the ſoule, as into the weake & ſenſible partes of the body; in ſuch ſort, that they alſo accept of theſe torments, & do accord togeather, & that the ſuperiour powers doe remoue certaine hardnes, difficulties, rages, and ſuch other diſorders, as ſpring and proceed ordinarily of thoſe repugnances, and contrarieties, which they haue bene accuſtomed to feele in the like incombrances: and the foreſaid ſuperiour part of the ſoule ought to procure, that in the vertue of this interiour recollection, they haue in themſelues a certaine promptnes to ſuffer all the foreſaid afflictions, euen as readily as if in place of theſe paines, there were preſented vnto them ſome thing agreable, cõmodious, or much to their contentment: by the ſame force, & vertue ſhe ought

to offer it, & returne it vnto God, accepting it only in him, and for him.

4. The fourth point, is to know, in what manner the ſuperiour part muſt ſuffer with the inferiour, and with the exteriour ſenſes, in the repugnances, & contrarieties which they feele, as hath bene ſaid before.

Remedie 9.

The ſuperiour part ought to doe all, that hath bene ſaid before, in the behalfe of the inferiour, and weakeſt partes, in ſuch ſort, that it be not with a certaine exceſſiue violēce, which may cauſe thē wholy to looſe their ſtrength, and vigour, or ſo as may trouble, or make the ſoule puſillanimous and fearefull, or els vtterly vnable to ſupport ſo great a blow; but ſhe ought for this cauſe ſomthing to ſuffer

ſuffer with them, and encourage them with all the reaſons ſhe can imagine, and ſhe muſt doe all this with the greateſt diſcretion that ſhe can poſſibly, in giuing now and then ſome relaxation vnto their trauailes, and afflictions, & in ſeeking the moſt conuenient remedies that ſhe can aduiſe herſelfe of. Euen as one that would haue a horſe, or any other beaſt to ſerue his turne, will giue him more meat, to the end he may be ſtrong, and able to trauaile better when there is need. And when by reaſon of diuine ſubtraction ſhe cannot vſe the force of any act of cõſolatiõ, or rayſing vp of her mind, ſhe ought to repoſe in this, and procure the partes that are inferiour, to repoſe in the will of God, and this by meanes of the diuine conformity, which will bring much more true and ſtrengthning

consolation, although it doth not seeme so.

5. The fift point is, how she ought to comport herselfe with selfe-loue in this case, or the like.

Remedies.

Selfe-Loue is accustomed to pretend & seeke in all thinges her owne interest, and particuler cõmoditie directly, or indirectly; and it doth so also in this, vnder pretence of many good reasons, yea euen of vertues, and purposeth many thinges that are not to the purpose; & for this cause the soule with the purity of a right intentiõ ought to discouer by the light of the loue of God, all his deceipts, & oppose herselfe against this selfe loue very freely, and effectually; & by the force of a pure & cleane loue, she ought to reiect all particuler and selfe respect, and follow purely

purely that which God ſhall inſpire, and teach her.

6. The ſixt point is, how that the ſuperiour part ought to anſwere to the propoſitions or offers, that our Lord will make vnto her concerning theſe paines, and afflictions, or other greater.

Remedies.

After this that hath byn aboue ſaid, our Lord is accuſtomed to make many propoſitiõs to the ſoule: as for example, that he will ſend her many other afflictions, or els make her endure this preſent affliction a long tyme, yea that we will cauſe her to ſuffer euen the paines of hell; and then ought ſhe with great promptnes to be wholy reſigned vnto God. He alſo is accuſtomed to giue the choice of two kindes of afflictions for her to accept of one. And in this

this caſe rayſing & fixing the eyes of her ſoule wholy in the perfect loue of God, with a meruailous purity, ſhe ought to make her election in God, and this choice muſt be alwaies of that which will redound moſt to his honour and glory.

7. The ſeauenth is, in what manner ſhe ought to behaue herſelf, that ſhe may vſe all her powers in the execution of this affaire, or of this affliction, and of all that which ſhalbe neceſſary, to come to the height of this perfection.

REMEDIES.

FOR as much as ordinarily in the exerciſing of all theſe thinges, it is neceſſary that all the powers, & faculties of the ſoule concurre therunto, to put it duly in execution; ſhe ought fully to reſolue with herſelfe to obſerue all that

that she hath deliberated vpon, in such sort, that aswell in generall, as in particuler, she may perfectly accomplish, & put in executiō all this that she hath already chosen, and resolued to doe in the present affliction, or in any other thing: and she ought to take heed diligently to correct the faultes that may happē in the executiō, eyther by reason of her imagination, and representation of afflictions, or of the vnderstanding, or of the will, or of all the other powers. And thus the soule that is perfect, shall become much more perfect: and all this is a disposition vnto the state, that rēdereth the soule wholy diuine.

THE

THE DAILY EXAMEN of our Conſcience, eſpecially at Night. §. 1.

TO giue God thanks for al benefits formerly receaued, and eſpecially of that preſent day.

2. To demaund grace & true light, to know & hate our ſinnes.

3. To call our ſoules to accompt, wherin we may haue that day offended God: hauing ſpecial conſideratiõ of ſuch defects wherunto we are moſt inclined.

4. To craue pardon humbly of God for al ſins & defects, wherof we find our ſelues guilty.

5. To make a firme purpoſe, through Gods grace to auoyd ſin heereafter, with intention to confeſſe thoſe wherein we haue tranſgreſſed. Laſtly, ſay *Pater noſter. Aue Maria. Credo.*

THE

THE PARTICVLAR EXAMEN to be made at three tymes, very necessary for the better disposing, & searching into our selues. §. 2.

THE first is in the morning when, assoone as we awake, we must purpose to keep a diligēt watch that day ouer our selues, for the auoyding of some sinne or imperfection, which we are desirous to amend.

The 2. is at Noone, when we must demaund Gods grace, that we may remember how often we haue fallen into that particuler sin or defect, & be more heedful heerafter. Then, let vs make our first Examen, calling our soule to accompt, & running ouer euery houre of the day to that present, how often we haue fallen therinto: & let vs make so many markes in

in the former lyne of the enſuing table. This done let vs purpoſe to keep our ſelues more warily the reſt of the day.

The 3. Time, ſhalbe at Night after ſupper, when we muſt make the ſecond Examen, running ouer euery houre from the former examination vntill that, calling to mind, & nũbring the times wherin we haue offended, making ſo many markes in the ſecond line of the table mentioned before.

FOVRE ADDITIONS very profitable, for the more eaſy & ſpeedy rooting out of any Vice, or ſinne. §. 3.

THE 1. is, that as often as we commit that particuler ſinne, we be ſory for it from our hart, in witnes wherof let vs lay our hand vpon our breſt: which may be done

done at all tymes, without being perceaued by others.

The 2. is, that at Night we number & compare the markes of both lines togeather, the former line being appointed for the first examen, & the later for the secōd: & let vs see, if from the former hath followed any amendment.

The 3. is, that we compare the examinations of the first & second day togeather, & marke whether any amendment hath byn made.

The 4. is, that by comparing two weeks togeather, it may appeare what amendment hath byn made, or omitted.

It is also to be noted, that the first of the lines following, which is longer then the rest, is appointed for the first day, the second somewhat shorter for the second day, and so likewise for euery day, shorter & shorter. It being meet

meet that the number of our faults be dayly diminiſhed.

Sunday
Mundy
Tweſday
Wedneſday
Thurſday
Friday
Saturday

CERTAYNE ADVERTISMENTS *neceßary for the better making of our Prayer.* §. 4.

BEFORE Prayer, the Soule mu't exerciſe it ſelfe in ſome acts of Humility, by conſidering its owne baſenes, and the greatnes of God, with whom it is to treate, and falling down vpon our knees we muſt begin with the ſigne of the Croſſe, bleſſing our ſelues, and crauing of the diuine Maieſty grace, to ſpend that ſhort tyme well,

well, which we are to imploy in that holy Exercise; so as all our thoughts, words, and workes may be sincerely addressed to the greater glory of God. Moreouer we must imagine a certayne Composition of place, and therein accommodate our selues in such manner as is taught vs, by our spirituall Father and Director in that case. Finally we must perswade our selues, that we stand in the presence of God, who is both within & round about vs, to the end that the imagination therof may incite vs to greater attention, cõfidence, and reuerence. Next we must aske of the diuine goodnes that, which we desire, answerable to the matter wherof the meditation is to be made. For example, if I meditate of sin, I will craue pardon for my owne &c.

We must also make one, or more Collo-

Colloquies at the end, according to the motions, & affection which the ſoule ſhall feele in it ſelfe, in ſpeaking ſometimes to the Bleſſed Trinity, ſometymes to euery one of the three Diuine Perſons, or to the B. Virgin, or the Saints, giuing thankes other whiles for benefits receiued, other whiles crauing Gods help, for getting of ſome one vertue in particuler.

The repetitions, that our F. Father S. Ignatius teacheth in the firſt Weeke of his Spirituall Exerciſes muſt be made after two, or three meditations, in ſuch manner, as is ſpecified in the ſame place, making three Colloquies, to wit, to the Father, to the Sonne, and to the B. Virgin.

THE

THE TABLE.

1. WHAT Perfection ought to be presupposed in the Soule, that entreth into the practice of that which is treated of, in this Discourse.
2. Two Principles wherein consisteth Perfection.
3. Of the 1. Estate: & first of Anihilatiõ.
4. Of the first Degree of Abnegation, Subtraction, Conformity: and of the Abiection & Anihilation of himselfe.
5. The second Degree.
6. The third Degree.
7. The fourth Degree.
8. The fifth Degree.
9. The six Degree.
10. Of the second Estate.
11. Of the third, and last Estate.

THE

THE LADDER of Perfection.

THE first Exercise of Anihilation.
The 2. Exercise of Disappropriation
3. The Exercise of Indifferency.
4 The Exercise of Conformity.
5. The Exercise of Vniformity.
6. The Exercise of Deiformity.
7. Of Selfe-loue.
8. Of the Effects of selfe-loue.
9. A Description of selfe-loue.
10. Properties of a soule infected with selfe-loue.
11. Remedies againſt selfe-loue.
12. A supply of this Abridgment, to ascend vnto a most high Perfection.
13. The Examen of our Conscience.

FINIS.

AN APPENDIX.

CONTAINING A CONTRACT of the Soule, with Almighty God.

IN the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the holy Ghoſt. I poore & miſerable Soule, do make with thy diuine maieſty, O my God, my Creatour, this Contract or Bargayne; by vertue whereof I wholy deliuer vp my ſelfe into thy diuine hands, & conſecrate my ſelfe vnto thee for a Handmayd, and Eſpouſe, or rather for a perpetuall ſlaue, with reſolute and firme purpoſe to accompliſh, with all my ſtrength, with a perfect denyall of

THE LADDER of Perfection.

THE first Exercise of Anibilation.
The 2. Exercise of Disappropriation
3. The Exercise of Indifferency.
4 The Exercise of Conformity.
5. The Exercise of Vniformity.
6. The Exercise of Deiformity.
7. Of Selfe-loue.
8. Of the Effects of selfe-loue.
9. A Description of selfe-loue.
10. Properties of a soule infected with selfe-loue.
11. Remedies agaynst selfe-loue.
12. A supply of this Abridgment, to ascend vnto a most high Perfection.
13. The Examen of our Conscience.

FINIS.

AN APPENDIX.

CONTAINING A CONTRACT of the Soule, with Almighty God.

IN the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the holy Ghoſt. I poore & miſerable Soule, do make with thy diuine maieſty, O my God, my Creatour, this Contract or Bargayne; by vertue whereof I wholy deliuer vp my ſelfe into thy diuine hands, & conſecrate my ſelfe vnto thee for a Handmayd, and Eſpouſe, or rather for a perpetuall ſlaue, with reſolute and firme purpoſe to accompliſh, with all my ſtrength, with a perfect denyall of

my ſelfe, thy moſt holy, moſt iuſt, & moſt vpright Will in all things. And for this cauſe with my owne hand, or rather with all the force and power of my hart, I now enrolle in the very Center thereof, this Contract and Oblation, with ſuch Intention, Force, Efficacy, Donation, & Reſignation, as thou O my God, canſt comprehed to be the beſt that my Soule is able to performe; and with full and abſolute reſolution to offer vp my ſelf, wholy & entierly vnto thee, without any contradiction.

And this, O my Lord, I deſire to be performed in the beſt manner, with moſt proper and fitteſt words, clauſes, & conditiõs that it ought, and may be performed. For cõfirmation & eſtabliſhmẽt whereof, I bring as witneſſes, the moſt Sacred Virgin Mary, Queene of Heauen, and the moſt holy Angells

gells, with all the other Cityzens of the celeſtiall Court; of whome I moſt humbly craue, that they would obtayn of thee, O my God, grace for me, that I may performe will all my hart this Oblation, which heere I make to thy greater glory, honour, and prayſe, whome proſtrate with moſt profound reuerence, & greateſt ſubmiſſion I adore, & worſhip with the greateſt affection that thou, O my Lord God, knoweſt may be giuen thee by all thy Creatures togeather. And I moſt humbly intreat thee, by thy immenſe Goodnes and Mercy, that thou wouldeſt vouchſafe louingly to receiue this Contract which now I mak with thee, and to ſeale it in Heauen in preſence of thy moſt bleſſed Mother, and all thy heauenly Court aforeſaid, that it may there be warranted & confirmed for euer.

This Contract therfore, and Agreement which I desire to make with thee is this, that as oftē as eyther in silēce & secret of my Hart, or else with exteriour signe I shall vtter from my hart Aspirations, or Sighes to thee, o Lord; thou wouldest vouchsafe of thy ineffable mercy and goodnes to accept, and receyue them from me, most base and vile creature, in such manner as I shall now declare.

The first Aspiration, which is, of Oblation.

AS often, O sweet Iesu, as I shall sigh, or with my hart, or mouth shall say, *O Iesu, treasure of my soule, I offer vnto thee*: & so passing no further, shall there end; I intend to offer vp vnto thy diuine Maiesty with the greatest affection & efficacy, that is possible for me, all

all this which followeth.

1. Firſt, I offer vp vnto thee, O Lord, my ſelfe both ſoule & body, togeather with all my thoughts, wordes and workes, perfectly denying my ſelfe, & reſigning my ſelfe wholy to thy holy will; in ſuch ſort, as I deſire, or refuſe nothing, but how, when, & how much it ſhall pleaſe thee, renouncing (as I do renounce) the world, the Diuel, & the fleſh, with al that they can affoard me.

2. I offer vnto thee, all the Riches & Treaſures of the world, with ſuch affection & deſire, as if it were in my power, I would wholy imploy them in thy ſeruice.

3. I offer vnto thee o Lord, all the ſhame, infamy, derifions, that vntill this houre haue byn, or may be offered vnto all the men that euer were; ſo that, if it were thy diuine pleaſure, I would moſt

willingly ſuffer thē for thy loue, with a moſt ioyfull hart.

4. I offer vnto thee all the paynes, griefes, torméts, labours diſtreſſes, perplexities, infirmities of body and ſoule, that euen vntill this preſent houre haue, or may be ſuffered by any in this World, Purgatory, or Hell.

5. I offer vp alſo, all the good works, thoughts, or words which all the Saints haue done, thought, or ſayd, to pleaſe and ſerue thee; ſo that, if it were in my power, I would do, ſay, & thinke them all for thy ſake, with a moſt pure intention, and earneſt deſire highly to pleaſe thee.

6. And to conclude, I offer vp to thee, o my Lord, all the labours, paynes, tribulatiōs, diſcomforts, and deſolations of ſoule & body, which thou ſhalt be pleaſed that I ſuffer for thy diuine loue.

The ſecond Aſpiration, of Petition.

MOREOVER, as often (O Lord) as ſighing I ſhall ſay; *O my God, I aske thee &c.* and without proceeding any further, ſhall there ceaſe; I intend to aske both for my ſelfe, & others theſe things that follow.

1. That thou wouldſt vouchſafe to grant me all that thou haſt taught me to demand in the *Pater Noſter.*

2. Pardon for my ſinnes, and that by thy infinite mercy, thou wouldeſt be pleaſed ſo to preſerue me, as that I may neuer commit them more.

3. True knowledge of my owne miſery, and thy greatnes.

4. The gifts of the holy Ghoſt and all other vertues, chiefly Humility, Obedience, Patience, and

that which thou, o Lord, shalt see to be most necessary for my body & soule.

5. That thou wouldst communicate thy diuine light & assistance, and conserue in thy grace & loue all faythfull people, especially the Pope, Cardinalls, Bishops, Clergy, and Religious persons.

6. That thou wouldest succour and ayd all Christians, both aliue and dead, my parents and kinsfolks, friends and enemies, benefactours, & all others who haue specially recommēded themselues vnto my prayers.

7. That thou wouldest giue me grace, that I may imitate the Saints, and thy glorious Mother the Blessed Virgin MARY.

8. Finally, that thou wouldst bestow on me, all that thou hast, all that thou knowest me possibly capable off, and all that thou art;

that

that thou wouldst conforme me, and vnite me vnto thee, with an inuiolable bond of loue.

The third Aspiration, of Thankes-giuing.

EVERY time, that I shall with a deepe sigh fetch these words from the bottome of my hart: *O my most benigne and gratious Father, I giue thee very harty thankes &c.* And shall there breake of, without vttering any more; I intend to thanke thee with al my hart with all my soule, for these benefits which heere I shall recount.

1. For that thou hast vouchsafed to create me to thy owne image and likenes, giuing me a soule with all its powers, a perfect body with all its senses.

2. For that thou hast cõserued & kept me vntill this present houre,

and haſt created all things, viſible and inuiſible, for my conſeruation.

3. For that through thy infinite goodnes and mercy thou haſt redeemed me, humbling thy ſelfe for my ſake euen vnto death, ſuffering for my ſake alſo through the whole courſe of thy life, labours, paines, & in concluſion & period therof, a moſt bitter death.

4. For that thou haſt loued me with an eternall & perpetuall loue.

5. For that by holy Baptiſme, thou haſt made me thy adoptiue ſonne, infuſing Grace, Charity, & other Vertues into my ſoule; and haſt made me a liuely Temple of the holy Ghoſt, adorned with rare and excellent gifts, not ſuffering me to haue byn ſome Turke, Iew, or Infidell.

6. For that thou of thy infinite Charity haſt drawne me out of the vgly

vgly ſepulcher of ſinne, in which I haue layen ſo long time entombed & ouerwhelmed.

7. For that thou haſt graciouſly preſerued me to doe penance.

8. For that thou didſt not ſtraight way condemne me, as my ſinnes deſerued.

9. For that inſteed of puniſhing me thou didſt moſt louingly admoniſh me, viſit me with thy holy Inſpirations; haſt called me efficaciouſly, haſt broken my chaines, haſt changed my delights, haſt renewed my ill cuſtones, haſt deliuered me from the thraldome & bondage of the Diuell; and as a ſonne haſt receiued me vnder the ſafegard of thy mercy.

10. For that thou haſt preuented me with bleſſings of thy ſweetnes; for I could not haue turned vnto thee if thou hadſt not awakened me.

11. For that thou haſt preſerued me from innumerable euills, dangers, and ſnares.

12. For that thou haſt inſtituted for my ſake the ſoueraigne and wholeſome Sacraments, fountaines of grace.

13. For that I haue receiued from thy gratious hand, particuler benefits, the which thou haſt not done vnto others, ſome that I know, others vnknowne vnto me, ſo much the more franke and liberall, how much the more hidden & ſecret.

14. For that (as I truſt in thy goodnes) thou haſt ordained me to life euerlaſting.

15. Finally, I moſt humbly thanke thee, for all the benefits, which thou haſt done vnto me, and to others, which thou daily doeſt, and ſhalt doe.

The fourth Aſpiration, of Praiſe.

AS often as with affection I ſhall ſay, *O wonderfull Lord, I praiſe thee &c.*

1. Firſt, I intend to giue the praiſes which all the men that euer were, are, or ſhall be, haue, do, or ſhall giue vnto thee; and all the praiſes which through negligence and careleſneſſe they haue forgetten to giue vnto thee.

2. All the praiſes that are written of thee in the Old or New Teſtament, or in all the bookes that were, are, or ſhall be, while the world endures.

3. I giue thee alſo, with all my hart, thoſe praiſes which all the Angells and Saints in Heauen do daily ſinge vnto thee.

4. Thoſe alſo which thy moſt holy mother did giue vnto thee, & thoſe

those with which thy Humanity it ſelfe did magnify thee.

5. All the praiſes, with which infinite Worlds, infinite Angells, infinite Creatures may poſſibly praiſe thee.

6. Laſtly, for the full accompliſhing of theſe praiſes, I deſire if it were poſſible, to haue all the harts that euer thou didſt create, or canſt create, the hart of the B. Virgin thy holy mother, and if thou wilt be pleaſed to giue me leaue to ſay ſo, thy owne Hart it ſelfe.

The Fifth Aſpiration, of Conformity.

AS often as I ſhall ſay, *O my God, conforme me &c.* I do intend, to take all my Imperfections iointly in one bundle, and to caſt them, ô Lord, into the furnace of thy diuine Loue, & with a feruent deſire

deſire, to ſeeke ſweet IESVS, the moſt perfect imitation of thee, & cheifly in the perfection of thoſe vertues, which did more eminētly ſhine in thee, to wit Loue, Humility, Meeknes, moſt conſtant Patience in all afflictions, Paines, Torments, & the like.

The ſixt Aſpiration, of Vnion.

AS often ô Lord as I ſhall ſay, *O God, chiefe Treaſure of my ſoule, vnite me vnto thy ſelfe, with an vnſeparable bond &c.* I intend with all the affection and inward deſire of my Hart, to yield my will wholy, entierly & perfectly vnto thy diuine pleaſure; abſolutely denying my ſelfe, without euer recalling this my determinatiō; in ſuch ſort, that I deſire nothing which thou doeſt not deſire, nor loue any thing which may diſpleaſe thee; &

in all occurrentes whatſoeuer, proſperous and aduerſe, thy holy will & pleaſure to remaine mine, in lieu of my greateſt deſires, greateſt delights, & greateſt comforts.

The ſeauenth Aſpiration, in generall.

AS often as I ſhal ſay, *O my God and all things &c.* I intend in ſilence, and in the bottome of my Hart, to do, ſay, and aske all that which is contained in the aforeſaid Aſpirations: that is, I intend to Offer, Aske, Giue thãkes, Praiſe, Conforme, & Vnite my ſelfe moſt perfectly with thy diuine Maieſty. AMEN.

CER-

CERTAINE ADVERTISMENTS TOVCHING *the Practice of the aforesayd Aspirations.*

THE first is, not to contemne, or make small account of this spirituall Negociation with God, & of this admirable manner of prayer, because it seemeth so plaine and easy. For first, it is certayne, that God heareth & vnderstãdeth the Sighes & Aspirations of one that is contrite and humble, and knoweth how far his affection reacheth, and intendeth. Secondly, the intention giueth all the perfection to the worke, in so much that if one doe many great workes, without a right

right intention, he ſhould merit nothing: as contrarywiſe if he doe the leaſt worke with a true & ſincere intention, inflamed with the loue of God, without doubt his gayne ſhould be very great.

The ſecond Aduertiſment is, that at the beginning of this foreſaid Exerciſe of deuotion, it is good to read often ouer, and to renew, & repeat the Couenants & Contracts made betweene God and vs, and that from the very bottome of our harts, & in good earneſt, as a thing which is done in the ſight of Gods diuine Maieſty. For by this meanes there is quickly obtayned great facility & dexterity to ſtand ſtedfaſtly in all occaſions of temptations: and this is conteyned in the firſt words of the Aſpiration.

The third Aduertiſment is, to repeat oftentimes aday theſe Aſpirations, and to frame the ſame by word

vord, or by thought. For by how more often they ſhalbe recited, & repeated, ſo much greater will the profit be: and the Soule in very ſhort time ſhall be found to be raiſed vp as much towards heauenly things, & vnited to her ſoueraigne Good, as ſhe ſhall be free from thoſe which be terrene and tranſitory.

The fourth is, that in the aforeſayd Aſpirations, when there is mẽtion made of leauing *all things*, or the like, it is to be vnderſtood concerning the affection to ſuch things, in thoſe as do actually poſſeſſe the ſame, ſo that they would be ready to forſake thẽ, if they vnderſtood, that it would be more pleaſing to Almighty God.

Finally, it is to be noted, that when this Contract is made with God, there is no meaning to make any Vow, or Promiſe, obliging vnder

vnder ſinne; but only to offer v
a mans ſelfe to the diuine Maieſty, with a great and efficacious deſire to do that which may moſt pleaſe him.

BRIEFE CONSIDERATIONS, which help to vnite the Soule with God.

THE ſixt Aſpiration aforeſayd is moſt fit for this purpoſe. And this alſo wil be much furthered by the conſideration of ſome particuler obiects.

The firſt may be, *Of a red hoate Iron*; where conſidering how the fire wholy penetrateth, & poſſeſſeth the Iron, not changing the ſubſtance, but only the accidents, as ruſtines, coldnes, and hardnes, by making it bright, hoate, & ſoft; thou mayſt make this Aſpiration, in thy hart: *O Lord, that one might be worthy*

to be ſo penetrated, and informed by thee! O how bright, how inflamed wold his ſoule be! how ſoft and tractable! how well diſpoſed to keepe thy commaundements! And ſtayng heere a little in an ardent deſire of Vnion with God, thou ſhalt ſoone taſt of the deſired fruit.

The ſecond is, *Of wine*, when it is mingled with water; to conſider how this mixture or vnion beautifyeth the water with its colour, and other qualities.

The third is, *Of a Carnation Flower*, or ſome fayre Roſe; conſidering how the Colour is vnited to the Quantity, and Subſtance of the Flower, making it ſo delightfull to behold: O how much more beautifull would that Soule remaine, to which the Creatour of thoſe colours ſhould come, and vnite himſelfe!

The fourth is, *Of the Light vnited with*

with the Ayre, making it so
and transparent: How much more if the true Sunne of Iustice should vnite himself with the soule!

The fifth is, *Of a white or ruddy Cloude, such as sometime appeares out of the reflexion of the Sun-beames &c.*

The Sixt is, *Of the morning*, whē as arysing by litle and litle it goeth changing, & inuesting the Horizon with the light of the Sunne: So doth the loue of God, change the iust mā that perseuereth therein, giuing him euery day more & more light, vntill he be wholy transformed into God.

Let vs beseech his diuine Maiesty to lift vs vp to this Perfectiō, that by giuing himself wholy vnto vs, he may so worke with vs, that wee may also giue our selues wholy vnto him. To whom be all honour, & glory world without end. Amen.

CER-

CERTAINE DEVOVT ASPIRATIONS, OR IACVLATORY PRAYERS.

O My God, that I could alwayes loue thee!

O that I could perfectly obey thee!

O that I could alwayes serue thee!

O that I neuer had offended thee!

O that I could see my selfe free from this, or that Imperfection!

O that I could obtaine this, or that excellent Vertue!

Giue me, O my sweet Iesus, Purity

rity of Soule, Humility o. Ha
Proue ty of Spirit!

O my ſweet Ieſus, that I knew thee, and knew my ſelfe!

Graunt me, O ſweet Ieſus, that I may entierly loue thee!

Graunt me, O my only Loue that I may continually reuerence, and adore thee!

O bottomleſſe ſea of Mercy, pardon me, and all Sinners, our manifold ſinnes, & offences!

Permit me not, O my Lord Ieſus, euer to be ſeparated from thee!

Poſſeſſe me, O ſweet Ieſus, p. ſeſſe me; and vnite me wholy vi thee.

FINIS.